

2025 Conference
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Preliminary Schedule
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Register
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Sponsorship
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Preliminary Schedule

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

8:00 AM

Registration Opens

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Pre-Conference Workshops

Pre-Conference Workshop

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

**Public Health Career Planning:
Insights for Student and Early Career
Professionals**

Whether you are preparing to graduate or have already landed your first job, this workshop will provide you with insights into the diverse ways in which public

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health is practiced and the potential pathways for future career growth. Participants will engage in two 30-minute case study discussions led by experienced public health professionals. These real-world scenarios will highlight varied approaches to public health policy and practice, with a focus on advancing health equity. The workshop also includes an hour dedicated to networking, with opportunities to connect with professionals and peers one-on-one, ask questions, and explore career options.

[Read less](#)

Pre-Conference Workshop

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

No One Left Behind: People Who Use Drugs and Public Health Protections

The impacts of potential changes in federal and state policy impacting people who use drugs (PWUD) is of deep concern. Centering the needs of PWUD in public health work, including creating a workforce that is prepared and empowered to both prevent and respond to negative policy changes that may negatively impact PWUD, their friends, families, and communities, is more

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necessary now than ever. Through discussion, case studies, and debate, attorneys from the Network for Public Health Law's Harm Reduction Legal Project will engage attendees to think creatively about how to center the health and dignity to all people, including PWUD. Participants will come away with a clear understanding of potential negative policy changes at the state and federal level and the knowledge and expertise to be better able to respond to the challenges facing PWUD and the harm reduction programs that serve them.

[Read less](#)

10:45 AM – 12:45 PM

Pre-Conference Workshops

Pre-Conference Workshop

10:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Reproductive Health Care: Anticipated Changes and Potential Impacts Under the New Administration

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Attend this workshop to hear from Network for Public Health Law attorneys who are closely monitoring changes in law and policy that impact access to reproductive health care directly or through indirect measures that deter pregnant people from seeking care. Many of the anticipated changes will likely affect Title X, the federal program that funds family planning; regulation of abortion medication by the Food and Drug Administration; and, potentially, changes to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Potential harms, including the possible effects of these changes on pregnant and parenting people who use drugs, will also be discussed. Interactive panel discussions will encourage audience participation via an extended Q&A session.

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Pre-Conference Workshop

10:15 PM – 12:15 PM

The How-To of Tribal Health Data Sharing

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The health and wellness of Tribal nations depend on effective data collection and analysis. This workshop is designed to provide public health lawyers and professionals with the knowledge to navigate and make the case for tribal access to public health data. The Urban Indian Health Institute is generously co-planning this workshop to highlight the Tribal Data Sovereignty movement to empower Indigenous people with rightful access to data as a tool of health equity and will share challenges, opportunities and successes in data sharing. The American Indian Health Commission and the Washington Department of Health will provide promising approaches for State and Federal agencies in the exchange and protection of Tribal data. The workshop will also include a case study activity on the surge in syphilis in South Dakota's tribal communities due to federal and state agencies withholding critical data.

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12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
Opening Celebration

Poster Sessions

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Opening Plenary

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2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

Advocacy and Community Engagement

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

**Through the Intersections:
Criminalization, Public Health, and the
Road Forward**

Speakers: Kerry Thomas; Jon Card,
J.D.; Kae Greenberg, Esq.; Sean
McCormick, Esq.

This session will focus on the consequences of the heightened criminalization of People Living with HIV (PLHIV), including the impact of collateral consequences post-release on health outcomes and service accessibility. HIV criminalization will serve as a case study for broader

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criminalization-based approaches, emphasizing the importance of coalition-based strategies to overcome criminalization and enable compassionate public health solutions, such as harm reduction.

[Read less](#)

Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Fighting Federal Attacks on Health Care Access and Equity through Legal and Policy Advocacy

Speakers: Madeline Morcelle, J.D., M.P.H.; Mara Youdelman, J.D., LL.M.; Sarah Somers, J.D., M.P.H.

This session will provide an overview of current federal attacks on and looming threats to Medicaid, the ACA, and civil rights, including those that affect sexual and reproductive health care access and equity. Learn how health law and policy advocates are responding through Congressional and administrative advocacy, litigation, and other enforcement actions, as well as opportunities to engage and help fight back.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Advancing Public Health and Harm Reduction Solutions to the Intersecting Crises of Homelessness and Overdose in the Era of Regressive Backlash

Speakers: Kate Boulton, J.D., M.P.H.; Amanda Hall, M.S.W.; Elizabeth Green, Ph.D.; Derek Carr, J.D.

Perceived public disorder and rising homelessness have driven backlash against proven public health policies, with jurisdictions across the political spectrum increasingly embracing criminalization and other coercive responses to drug use and homelessness – a trend likely to worsen following the Grants Pass decision and 2024 election. In this session, presenters will explore this shifting landscape and provide attendees with legal, messaging, and advocacy strategies to defend and advance health-centered, harm reduction-oriented policies on drug use and homelessness.

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Health and Racial Health Equity

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

How to Weave Cultural Healing in Clinical Care to Promote Community Health & Well-Being

Speakers: Sara Rogers, M.P.H.; Maria Vallejo, M.S.W.; Monique Nelson, Christina McCoy

Culture shapes how individuals and families perceive health, interact with systems, and receive care, shaping both personal and collective well-being. This session will explore cultural healing and how culturally responsive approaches can be “weaved” into clinical care to foster trust, engagement, and improve health access and outcomes. It will also highlight key policy reforms that support these practices, creating opportunities to advance similar efforts in other healthcare and public health settings.

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Strengthening Public Health Protections

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Enhancing Legal Literacy for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response

Speakers: Jessica Baggett, Dr.PH., M.P.H.; Rachel Lookadoo, J.D.; Maggie Davis, J.D., M.A.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the critical role of legal literacy in public health emergency response, revealing the need to enhance state health officials' understanding and application of emergency powers. A recent research study that included a national survey of current and former state health officials and qualitative interviews, identified gaps in knowledge, skill deficiencies, and barriers to effective practice in key topic areas such as data sharing, environmental health regulations, and implementing community mitigation measures. This session will detail the study's key findings and recommendations for practice, and discuss training curriculum that can equip public health officials with the tools

necessary to effectively navigate legal complexities, advocate for public health policies, and respond to emergencies.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, and Privacy

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Privacy at the Crossroads: Adapting to New Regulations and Developments

Speakers: Stephen Murphy, J.D.; Meghan Mead, J.D.

Join us for a special in-person privacy peer learning session hosted by the Network's Privacy Officer Peer Group and open to anyone with an interest in privacy. This session will include a discussion of recent updates to 42 CFR Part 2 and the current landscape of HIPAA enforcement. Network presenters will discuss implications for privacy of substance use data, the status and implications of the HIPAA Final Rule to Support Reproductive Health Care Privacy, OCR's Right to Access Initiative, and state efforts to protect data from inappropriate access or use.

4:00 PM – 5:15PM
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Advocacy and Community Engagement

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

Supporting and Developing Regenerative Leaders in Public Health

Speakers: Monica Valdes Lupi, J.D.,
M.P.H., Daisy Ellis, M.P.H., María
Gallegos

As the landscape for public health changes, leaders must develop the skills to undertake new challenges through regenerative practices. PHEARLESS, which stands for the Public Health Regenerative Leadership Synergy, emerged from a collaborative process to better prepare health department leaders and their staff to intentionally design communities where all can thrive. A total of 15 collaboratives were selected through an application process to participate in the professional

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development leadership program. The collaboratives were small teams representing staff from local health department and established community-based partners. The collaboratives submitted projects that they intended to complete throughout the course of the training and development program that ultimately would improve their community in a tangible way. The collaboratives were given seed funding to support their efforts and they were to demonstrate the application of mindsets and skillsets, acquired through PHEARLESS, to transform systems with a focus on regenerative leadership. The educational team (USF), technical assistance providers, mentors and peers collectively provided and supported the collaboratives in their final projects. As part of the evaluation of the program, Photovoice, was used to document the experience and the manifested changes in the teams. Collaboratives will share their experience and highlight their projects, how the leadership development program influenced their work and the impact on their collaboration and organizations moving forward.

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Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

Artificial Intelligence Assisted Policy Analysis and Legal Mapping

Speakers: Cason Schmit, J.D., Regen Weber-Fares, J.D., M.P.H., Snigdha Peddireddy, M.P.H.; Mara Howard-Williams, J.D., M.P.H.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) present new tools for increasing efficiency of legal mapping and policy analysis for legal epidemiology. Recent uses of AI/ML in legal mapping provide insight into utilization of this methodology. This session will include a discussion of the issues and applications of AI/ML technologies in public health legal research, including AI/ML-assisted legal mapping methodology considerations, use of large language models for coding health data-sharing laws, and innovative approaches to real-time surveillance of emergency laws.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

Rural Pharmacies: A Community Pillar to Strengthen Harm Reduction

Speakers: Devin Sweat, M.S.W.,
L.S.W., L.A.C.; Heidi Wood, Pharm.D.,
M.A.S, B.C.P.S, A.A.H.I.V.P; Sophie
Durham, Pharm.D.

This session will delve into innovative strategies for strengthening community-based harm reduction, particularly in rural areas. By examining successful models and addressing legal and policy challenges, participants will gain valuable insights into expanding access to naloxone and implementing sustainable harm reduction programs. The session will highlight practical solutions, lessons learned, and best practices for public health professionals, policymakers, and community leaders working to address the opioid crisis.

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Health and Racial Health

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Equity

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

Centering True Lived Experience in Policy to Support Health During Reentry from Incarceration

Speakers: Emma Kaeser, J.D.; Quang Dang, J.D.; Dorel Clayton, C.P.S.S.; Susan Fluerant, J.D., M.P.H.

The period when individuals reenter their communities following incarceration presents an important intervention point to mitigate the health harms of incarceration. Legal and policy innovations, such as Medicaid section 1115 waivers, provide opportunities to address health and social needs during reentry. This panel will examine the importance of centering the lived experience of people who are formerly incarcerated in development and implementation of these policies to promote dignity and wellbeing and to avoid replicating health-harming carceral systems.

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Strengthening Public Health

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Protections

4:00 PM – 5:15 PM

**Legal Epidemiology for Health
Departments: A Tool for Evaluating
Policy Impact on Population Health**

Speakers: Scott Burris, J.D; Alexandra Hess, J.D., M.P.H.; Elizabeth Platt, J.D., M.A.; Elizabeth Van Nostrand, J.D.

This interactive panel will support legal epidemiology capacity-building in health departments to strengthen and support policy evaluation and change. The panel will introduce new tools and resources developed for and in consultation with a curated community of practice to meet the needs of health departments using legal epidemiology to evaluate their public health laws. Panelists will solicit feedback on the tools and resources while detailing case study projects from community of practice members.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, and Privacy

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**Modernizing Data for Public Health
Impact: Strategies for Secure Release
and Smarter Systems**

Speakers: Deja Kemp, Esq.; Jennifer Schitter, M.P.H.; Taylor Pinsent, M.P.H.

As public health challenges evolve, so must our approach to data management and sharing. This session will provide an overview for developing clear guidance for aggregate data release and creating a roadmap for data modernization.

Participants will explore strategies to strengthen data infrastructure, balance transparency with privacy, and support more responsive public health efforts. Whether navigating legacy systems or planning for the future, this discussion offers practical tools and forward-looking perspectives to better leverage data for better health outcomes.

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Wednesday, September 17, 2025

7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Registration Open/Breakfast Buffet

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Poster Session

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

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Advocacy and Community Engagement

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Pro-Vaccine Advocacy at the State Level: Legislative and Judicial Trends

Speakers: Ashley Chambers, J.D.; R. Northe Saunders; Richard Hughes IV, J.D., M.P.H.

The SAFE Communities Coalition supports pro-vaccine legislation and lawmakers, and empowers everyday people (the often silent pro-vaccine majority) to advocate for health and safety alongside medical, legal, and public health professionals. This session will provide information on recent state-focused legislative and judicial trends, and how to participate in advocacy efforts as part of a broad and diverse coalition of partners that supports public

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health, works for equitable access to immunization, and advocates for laws that protect vulnerable populations.

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Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

Diving into Wastewater Surveillance for Public Health: Data Access, Sharing, and Legal Considerations for Using Poo's Clues

Speakers: Rachel Hulkower, J.D., M.S.P.H.; Heather Huntley, J.D., M.H.A.; Rachel West, Ph.D.

Wastewater surveillance is an emerging public health tool that has been implemented throughout the U.S., its territories, and Tribal lands. The session will discuss future wastewater surveillance priorities and how these may relate to public health ethics and law. This session will also discuss legal authorities related to conducting wastewater surveillance, including broad public health authorities, specific statutory authorities, and the police power of states under the Constitution.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

**Advancing Policy for Public Health:
Using Legal Epidemiology to Advance
Harm Reduction Policies to Improve
Outcomes Related to HIV and Viral
Hepatitis**

Speakers: Scott Burris, J.D.; Katie Moran-McCabe, J.D.; Tamara Rushovich, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Empirical research on the health effects of law can empower public health leaders to identify and implement evidence-based legal changes. This session explores the use of legal epidemiology to uncover opportunities for policymakers to increase law's effectiveness to achieve better outcomes related to HIV and viral hepatitis. Panelists will discuss the need for research on policy interventions, longitudinal legal data on laws related to syringe access, and studies analyzing the health effects of these laws.

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Health and Racial Health Equity

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

Embedding Equity in State-Wide Decision Making to Address Root Causes of Health Inequities

Speakers: Cait Lang-Perez, M.P.H.; Miranda Calmjoy, M.P.H.; Lindsay Herendeen, M.P.H., M.C.R.P.

In 2006, the Washington State Legislature authorized the State Board of Health to conduct Health Impact Reviews (HIRs) in collaboration with the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities. An HIR is an objective, non-partisan, evidence-based analysis that provides the Washington State Governor and legislators with information on how a legislative or budgetary proposal may impact health and equity. This session will explore the development, evolution, and influence of HIRs as a state-wide decision-making tool.

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Strengthening Public Health Protections

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

The Case for Modernizing Public Health Systems Through Better Governance

Speakers: Darlene Huang Briggs, J.D., M.P.H.

Imagine a trusted and modernized public health system that meets the needs of the communities it serves. This session will describe and align existing legal authorities and policy principles at play in national public health frameworks such as the 10 Essential Public Health Services and Foundational Public Health Services, which aim to drive public health system modernization, and action-oriented frameworks for adopting more efficient, effective, and transparent government processes that modernize and streamline administrative burdens.

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Health

9:10 AM – 10:30 AM

Disaggregating Public Health Data by Race and Ethnicity to Improve Public Health

Speakers: Leslie Zellers, J.D.; Amy Vertal, M.P.H.; Lizette Escobedo; Lloyd Feng

Disaggregated data on race and ethnicity allows public health professionals to create appropriate, efficient, and equitable interventions to improve health outcomes. This session will provide an overview of state laws to disaggregate race and ethnicity data; best practices for state data disaggregation laws; and case studies from California and New York about the adoption and implementation of those state's data disaggregation laws.

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10:30 AM – 10:45 PM

Networking Break

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

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Advocacy and Community Engagement

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Community Determined Policies and Intervention: Approaches to Climate Change and Health Equity

Speakers: Bradley Kramer, Ph.D., M.P.H.; Jessica Jeavons, J.D.; Ginna Hernandez Rodriguez, M.P.I.A.

The session will feature three dynamic approaches by Public Health – Seattle & King County to reach community self-determined solutions to address policy and interventions that accelerate health equity. Presenters will speak on multi-sectorial issues surrounding extreme weather, climate change, and resilience. Each presentation features direct and deep engagement with the most impacted individuals, community-based organizations, and other partners, and highlights approaches ranging from systems modeling, representative survey sampling, and policy priority co-creation.

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Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

2021-2022 Racial Equity Dataset: A Searchable Collection of Laws Related to Racial Health Equity

Speakers: Quang Dang, J.D.; Phyllis Jeden, J.D.; Alexandra Hess, J.D., M.P.H.

In the wake of the renewed racial justice movement in 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, jurisdictions across the country enacted laws to address health disparities and advance racial equity — as well as laws that may impede these goals. The Network for Public Health Law sought to identify these laws based on keyword searches in bills proposed in the 2021 and 2022 legislative cycles in all 50 US states. As a result of this research, laws that were enacted, and that were still in effect on December 31, 2022, were compiled into a cohesive dataset to provide insight into the outcomes of those legislative sessions.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Expanding Access to Lifesaving Care: Strategies to Leverage Emergency Medical Services to Address Drug Overdoses

Speakers: KT Kramer, J.D., M.H.A.; Cara Alexander, Ph.D., B.C.D., L.C.S.W.; Susan Schoeld, A.M., L.M.H.C.; Matthew Burgan, N.R.P., CP-C

Federal grants, contracts, and other forms of financial assistance form the cornerstone of federal investment in substance use prevention and harm reduction services. When designed effectively, these funding streams play a critical role in shaping policy, driving community engagement, and enhancing comprehensive prevention systems. This session will explore how the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention has employed innovative strategies in its discretionary grant programs to strategically leverage federal funding to build sustainable harm reduction infrastructure in communities, with a particular focus on the First

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Responders-Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (FR-CARA) grant program. Speakers will address how grant language and requirements support community-led harm reduction initiatives that integrate seamlessly with broader prevention, treatment, and recovery systems, including efforts to revise language in FR-CARA and other grants to ensure alignment with statutory requirements while offering recipients the flexibility needed to develop adaptive, community-specific solutions.

[Read less](#)

Health and Racial Health Equity

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting the Moment: Addressing Structural Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Access and Equity

Speakers: Jen Stollow, Ph.D., M.P.H.; Kaytura Felix, M.D.; Madeline Morcelle, J.D., M.P.H.; Amy Merceicia

Structural oppression continues to shape access to sexual and reproductive health care, disproportionately harming Black, Indigenous, and other people of color,

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LGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, and other marginalized communities. This session will examine policy, legal, and grassroots advocacy strategies to advance sexual and reproductive health care access and equity, including the use of planned community-based childbirth to racism in pregnancy care; the role of nondiscrimination law in promoting sexual and reproductive health care equity for undervalued communities; and lessons from Ireland's abortion rights movement in identifying coalition-building strategies that can inform advocacy efforts in politically and religiously conservative contexts.

[Read less](#)

Strengthening Public Health Systems

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Beyond Legislation: Litigation, Rulemaking, and Policy Implementation to Promote Health Equity

Speakers: Sarah de Guia, J.D.; Sabrina Adler, J.D.; Alexis Etow, J.D.; Maya Watts, J.D.

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Policy change efforts often focus on legislation as a tool, but there are non-legislative strategies that can be equally if not more effective, particularly in challenging political climates. This session will provide an overview, using case studies and specific examples, of three non-legislative avenues to advance health equity: litigation, rulemaking, and equitable implementation of laws and policies. Participants will learn about how to utilize these strategies, and will have the opportunity to discuss them.

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12:05 PM – 1:35 PM

Lunch Keynote

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

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Engagement

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

**Health and Democracy:
Democratizing Community Health
Assessments**

Speakers: Gnora Mahs, Dr.PH., M.P.H.;
Margarita Northrop, M.P.H., M.I.P.A.;
Jeannette Raymond; Jeanna Ayers,
R.N., M.P.H.

There is a growing recognition of the interconnected relationship between democracy and health. Healthy People 2030 named increasing voter participation as a core objective paving the way for health departments to prioritize promoting civic and voter participation across their community health assessments, plans, and programs. In this session, leaders from Minnesota and Wisconsin will share examples of advancing health equity by building cross-sectoral partnerships and strengthening civic participation through health assessment and planning processes.

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Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

Preparing for the Next Public Health Emergency: Investment in Broadband Infrastructure to Improve Public Health Outcomes

Speakers: Sara Raza, LL.M.; Seth Hoedl, Ph.D., J.D.; Waide Warner, J.D.

From vaccine appointments and test results to tracking CDC mask mandates, healthcare and public health's reliance on the internet surged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual care became the new norm, prompting laws and policies to expand access to telehealth. At the same time, public health agencies took on broad new initiatives to conduct contact tracing, surveillance, and other outreach functions, many of which relied on rapid and secure electronic communications. This session will discuss laws and policies that engage public health departments in digital equity programming to advance health equity and will examine the potential roles public health agencies can play in leveraging broadband infrastructure investments to sustain telehealth

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expansion and support other public health functions in the long-term, to be ready to respond when the next disaster calls.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

Disability Justice: Novel Approaches to Using the American Disabilities Act to Protect the Rights of People Living with Disabilities and Promote Public Health

Speakers: Bianca Laureano, Ph.D, M.A., C.S.E., C.S.E.S.; Milo Inglehart, J.D.; Amelia Caramadre, Esq., M.P.H.; Sean McCormick, J.D.

This session will explain the historical and ongoing discrimination against people living with disabilities and explore its convergence with other forms of oppression. Speakers will provide innovative legal strategies to address discrimination against people living with HIV and those with substance use disorders, as well as steps for using

these approaches to protect the rights of people living with stigmatized conditions and promote public health.

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Health and Racial Health Equity

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

Fighting the Anti-Anti-Racism Movement through Theory, Practice, and Litigation

Speakers: April Shaw, Ph.D., J.D.

This session examines the anti-anti-racism movement and its public health impacts. It assesses legal and narrative trends focusing on where we are, where we were, and what has changed.

Turning to practice, participants will learn about real-world health impacts, including pivots to nonetheless meet the needs of people of color. Participants will also learn about what is being done on the litigation front to challenge the sweeping measures to eradicate anti-racist public health efforts.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, and Privacy

1:45 PM – 3:00 PM

**State Health Departments and Tribes:
A New Public Health Data Sharing
Approach and Model**

Speakers: Chris Alibrandi O'Connor, J.D.; Peter Reckmeyer, J.D.

Long-standing barriers hinder state health departments from sharing data with Tribal Health Organizations (THOs). These barriers, which may include legal obstacles, uncertainty, and a lack of trust, keep states from working collaboratively with THOs and leveraging their resources and skills to address shared public health objectives. Learn how Alaska's Division of Public Health and the Alaska Native Epidemiology Center's recent successful effort to address and remove those barriers can be an approach and model for health departments and Tribal organizations.

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3:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Networking Break

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

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Advocacy and Community Engagement

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

The Role of Law and Policy in Achieving Mobility and Transportation Equity

Speakers: Kerri McGowan Lowrey, J.D., M.P.H.

This session will use didactic presentations and a facilitated large-group discussion to: (1) present the results of a legal mapping study, funded under a NHTSA Cooperative Agreement, and discuss how novice driver licensing laws may impact marginalized communities (e.g., due to delayed licensure); (2) discuss how law could be adjusted or harnessed to promote equity in mobility and crash outcomes; (3) how emerging technologies and

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transportation policy can be used to achieve mobility equity, and (4) discuss challenges in implementation, enforcement, and advocacy for law and policy change in this area, and possible ways to overcome them. This session will also include a discussion of the impact of changing national leadership on advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.

[Read less](#)

Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Integration of Public Health in Climate Strategies by Major U.S. Cities: A Pragmatic Look at the Treatment of Climate-Health Crisis in Municipal Policies

Speakers: Keegan Warren, J.D., LL.M., Patrick Murphy, M.B.A.

The field of sustainability seeks to integrate environmental health, social equity, and economic vitality for the well-being of current and future generations.

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A critical emerging challenge in this field is addressing the growing impacts of climate change on communities. Despite the clear ties between environmental health and public health, and despite a nascent global emphasis on the “climate-health crisis,” little empirical research has examined whether and how U.S. cities have integrated public health into their climate action plans, and how those plans align with local public health strategies. This session will discuss the alignment of climate actions plans with public health adaptation strategies, as well as leading practices and persistent gaps that must be addressed as municipal climate strategies grow in sophistication and public health strategies take increasing account of climate risks.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

The Future of Harm Reduction in an Increasingly Hostile Legal Environment

Speakers: Amy Lieberman, J.D.

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How can public health professionals work collaboratively with harm reduction programs in a hostile legal and political environment to ensure best health practices, safety, and dignity for people who use drugs and their communities? This session will discuss the current legal landscape and discuss strategies to support harm reduction providers and their communities, emphasizing coalition-building, creativity, and courage.

[Read less](#)

Health and Racial Health Equity

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Maternal Health Disparities and Local Health Department Engagement

Speakers: Monica Valdes-Lupi, J.D., Angelina Esparza, R.N., M.P.H.

The Kresge Foundation hosted a Maternal Health Disparities Leadership Summit. The Summit provided a roundtable discussion to explore persistent and alarming disparities in maternal and child health outcomes and examine local approaches to data, access to care, and policy needed to

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ameliorate disparities. The goal was to create an opportunity for local health departments to share promising practices, common challenges, and identify collaborative opportunities to address the issue.

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Strengthening Public Health Protections

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Challenges and Opportunities in Public Health Under the Trump Administration

Speakers: Scott Burris, J.D., Linda Tvrdy, J.D., Ph.D., Sara Bartel, J.D.

The 2023-2024 Supreme Court term and the 2024 elections ushered in a new and unfamiliar landscape for public health law. In the session, the Act for Public Health partnership will identify the resulting challenges and opportunities in the public health landscape, including: (1) federal legislative and executive actions impacting public health; (2) the impact of recent Supreme Court decisions; and (3) opportunities for state

and local governments to strengthen public health authority to address social determinants of health.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, And Privacy

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Advancing Health Equity through Community Information Exchanges (CIEs)

Speakers: Stephen Murphy, J.D.; Emma Kaeser, J.D.; Waldo Mikels-Carrasco, M.A.; Ellen Clewett, M.P.H, C.H.P.S.E.

A community information exchange (CIE) is a community governed infrastructure that enables critical health and social information to be responsibly shared among partner organizations in support of holistic coordination of care and equitable systems change. In this session, panelists will share practical insights from the development of a CIE in the Chicago/Cook County, Illinois area, exploring CIEs as a model for promoting health equity and discussing lessons learned for developing a workable legal framework.

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Advocacy and Community Engagement

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

**Building Partnerships with
Community and Cross-Sectoral
Partners to Advance Health and
Health Equity**

Speakers: Angela McGowan, J.D.,
M.P.H.; Rya Griffis, M.P.H.

Strong cross-sectoral and community partnerships are critical to advancing public health and health equity.

Advocacy and collaboration ensure laws and policies facilitate, not impede, health and well-being, which in turn creates the conditions communities need to enable everyone to be healthy and thrive. This session highlights lessons for creating partnerships with public health, cross-sectoral, community-based, and power-building organizations and provides tools

and resources to identify shared values and priorities and build transformational relationships with lasting impact on communities' health.

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Health and Racial Health Equity

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

The Public Health Case for Reparations and Insights from the Field

Speakers: Melissa Jones, M.P.A.; Brandon Greene, Esq.; Bobbie Alexander, M.B.A.

This session explores the intersections of public health and reparations policies. Public health experts, legal advocates, and local government leaders will examine the transformative potential of this strategy for addressing health inequities and collaborative approaches to design and implement reparative policies in diverse local contexts. Participants will explore opportunities for reparative actions, potential health benefits, and what it takes to advance this work in the current national environment.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, and Privacy

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

Protect and Share: Empowering data sharing with ethical governance and social license to address disparities in marginalized communities

Speakers: Cason Schmit, J.D.; Deja Kemp, Esq.; Isabel Algrant, M.S.; Meghan O’Connell, M.D., M.P.H.

This session will explore how ethics-based policies and practices are key to unlocking the full potential of data for impactful public health interventions. The presentations will underscore the critical role of establishing a strong social license and implementing good data governance as protective ethical practices. These frameworks are essential for fostering trust and enabling more effective data sharing and use, particularly when addressing the interconnected needs of marginalized communities and dismantling systemic inequities that often skew data and hinder progress. Participants will be introduced to the updated, “A Toolkit for

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Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration.” This revised resource offers practical strategies and 53 new real-world examples for identifying and mitigating bias across the data lifecycle. The session will also focus on the persistent challenges faced by Tribal governments and Tribal epidemiology centers in accessing vital public health data.

[Read less](#)

Ignite Session: Harm Reduction-Focused Sessions

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

42 CFR Part 2 and Privacy Protections for People Who Use Drugs, People in Treatment and People in Recovery

Speakers: Jacqueline Seitz, J.D.

Federal privacy protections for substance use disorder treatment records promote important public health and policy goals by encouraging people to access treatment, promoting the therapeutic relationship in treatment, and protecting people from stigma,

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discrimination, and criminalization.

These important privacy protections, specifically 42 CFR Part 2, are also confusing, complex, and changing, with five rulemakings in seven years, with an upcoming compliance date of February 2026. This presentation offers insight into the changes, dispel common misconceptions and confusion about sharing substance use-related data across sectors, and provide a framework for thinking and applying privacy protections in the context of public health.

[Read less](#)

Ignite Session: Harm Reduction-Focused Sessions

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

Legal Strategies to Require Pharmacies to Stock Buprenorphine in Pennsylvania

Speakers: Shanaya Desai

Buprenorphine is a life-saving medication for many people with opioid use disorder, and is a key tool in efforts to decrease overdose and other drug-related harms. Fortunately, the process and requirements for prescribing

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buprenorphine have become less onerous; unfortunately, many pharmacies do not stock buprenorphine or refuse to fill prescriptions. This presentation focuses on legal strategies for requiring pharmacies to stock buprenorphine in Pennsylvania, including potential causes of action to compel pharmacies to stock buprenorphine based in Pennsylvania statutory, regulatory, and common law; and explores a plan for mobilizing change in relevant state agencies to better specify pharmacy obligations and to ensure appropriate implementation and enforcement.

[Read less](#)

Ignite Session: Harm Reduction-Focused Sessions

4:35 PM – 5:50 PM

Public Health Policy to Advance Drug Checking Services

Speakers: Carmelita Cruz, Esq.

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute currently oversees over one dozen drug checking services programs, co-located with existing harm reduction programs, as pilot programs. A

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temporary licensing structure was created with the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement while a statutory amendment is advanced with the Legislature. The presentation will include an overview of the public health law framework to support drug checking programs as well as an overview of existing programs, best practices in development and partnership with the Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement to address licensure; and highlight the various community partnerships the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute has developed over the past four decades and how those partnerships enhance public health policy development and implementation.

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6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Conference Reception

Thursday, September 18, 2025

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Breakfast Plenary

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Concurrent Sessions

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Advocacy and Community Engagement

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Policy Co-Design Through Community Engagement

Speakers: Ginna Hernandez Rodriguez, M.P.I.A.; Jessica Jeavons, J.D.; Sarah Walker, Ph.D.; Angel Swanson

This presentation will highlight the innovative approaches taken by Public Health – Seattle & King County and the University of Washington CoLab to address public health issues through community-centered policy co-creation. Attendees will gain insight into the methodologies, challenges, and successes of these collaborative efforts aimed at improving health outcomes by

addressing racism, fostering multisector collaboration, and increasing food security.

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Emerging Issues and Legal Challenges

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

The Misclassification of Misoprostol and Mifepristone as Controlled Substances – A Public Health and Legal Response

Speakers: Jeanie Donovan, M.P.H., M.P.Aff.; Ryann Martinek, M.P.H.; Ellie Schilling, J.D.

In 2024, Louisiana became the first state to place misoprostol and mifepristone on the state's Controlled Substances List in a misguided attempt to reduce access to the drugs, which are used in medication abortion but also in many other medical procedures. Now other states are looking to follow in the footsteps of Louisiana. Learn how leaders at one local health department and advocates are fighting back against this misuse of the Controlled Substances Act.

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Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Overdose Prevention Centers: State of the Law and Continuing Momentum

Speakers: Kellen Russoniello, J.D.

With nearly 100,000 people dying of overdose in the United States every year, communities must take bold action to save lives. Overdose prevention centers (OPCs) are evidence-based harm reduction interventions that improve public health and safety and should be part of a comprehensive approach to drug policy. Panelists will provide a legal overview of the current status of OPCs, recent wins and challenges, and policy developments across the country.

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Health and Racial Health

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Equity

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Collaborative for Anti-Racism & Equity (CARE): Advancing Legal and Equity Innovations for Racial Justice in Public Health

Speakers: Sara Rogers, M.P.H.; Alexis Etow, J.D.; Dawn Hunter, J.D., M.P.H.; Lawrence Haynes

This session will look at the pressing issue of health and racial equity work in the face of current challenges. Presenters will explore tools and strategies to maintain momentum and communicate effectively in support of communities where everyone can thrive. Attendees will leave with the knowledge and tools to stay motivated and purposeful and learn how to continue doing this work without making it a target.

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Public Health Data Access, Sharing, and Privacy

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

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Is TEFCA a panacea? What TEFCA solves, what it doesn't solve, and how you can use it

Speakers: Lillian M. Colasurdo, J.D., M.E.L.P.; Nichole Sweeney, J.D.

The promise of TEFCA for data sharing with public health authorities has been heralded from the top offices at the Federal Government. This session will explore whether and how early implementers have glimpsed this promise – what has worked, what has not, and what still needs to be solved. The session will also discuss when TEFCA benefits from working with local entities such as health information exchanges and how such partnerships can promote local concerns with national data exchange.

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12:00 PM

Conference Adjourns

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