

20 Public 25 Health Leaders Summit

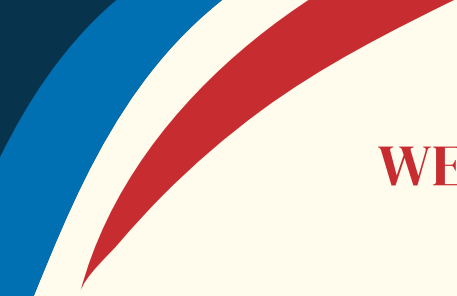


Leveraging Partnerships, Communications, & Workforce
Innovation to Strengthen Local Public Health

October 22nd - 24th | Canandaigua, NY



NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION
OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22nd, 2025

**PRE-CONFERENCE:
RURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

12:00 PM - REGISTRATION OPEN

1:00 - 1:15 PM - PRE-CONFERENCE OPENING REMARKS

KEVIN D. WATKINS, MD, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR,
CATTARAUGUS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & PRESIDENT-ELECT,
NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

**1:15 - 2:15 PM - BUILDING BRIDGES: CONNECTING PUBLIC
HEALTH AND COUNTY LEADERSHIP**

Public health doesn't operate in isolation – it's shaped by county budgets, leadership decisions, and state and federal policy. This session will offer a "County Government 101" overview, highlight key NYSAC resources, and share practical, actionable strategies for connecting public health priorities to broader county goals.

ALEXANDRA REGAN, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR, NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

MEGAN NOVAK, LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR, NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

**2:15 - 3:45 PM - FRAMING PUBLIC HEALTH IN RURAL
SETTINGS**

The way we talk about public health shapes how people value and support it. This session offers practical strategies for framing the social and economic factors that influence health, explaining equity in plain language, and countering misinformation – especially in rural contexts. Participants will leave with tools to communicate public health in ways that build trust, resonate with communities, and inspire action.

NICO CONNOLLY, PRINCIPAL STRATEGIST, FRAMEWORKS INSTITUTE



3:45 - 4:15 PM - BREAK

4:15 - 5:15 PM - VOICES OF EXPERIENCE: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FROM SEASONED PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERS (PANEL)

Learn from your colleagues and hear from three public health officials with decades of experience as they discuss what it takes to communicate with clarity and confidence – whether engaging community members, county leaders, or the media – and how strong communication can drive public health impact and success.

PANELISTS

HEIDI BOND, CPH, BSN, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, OTSEGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & PRESIDENT, NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS

PAUL A. PETTIT, MSL, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, GENESEE & ORLEANS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

DANIEL J. STAPLETON, PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO & FORMER PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, NIAGARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

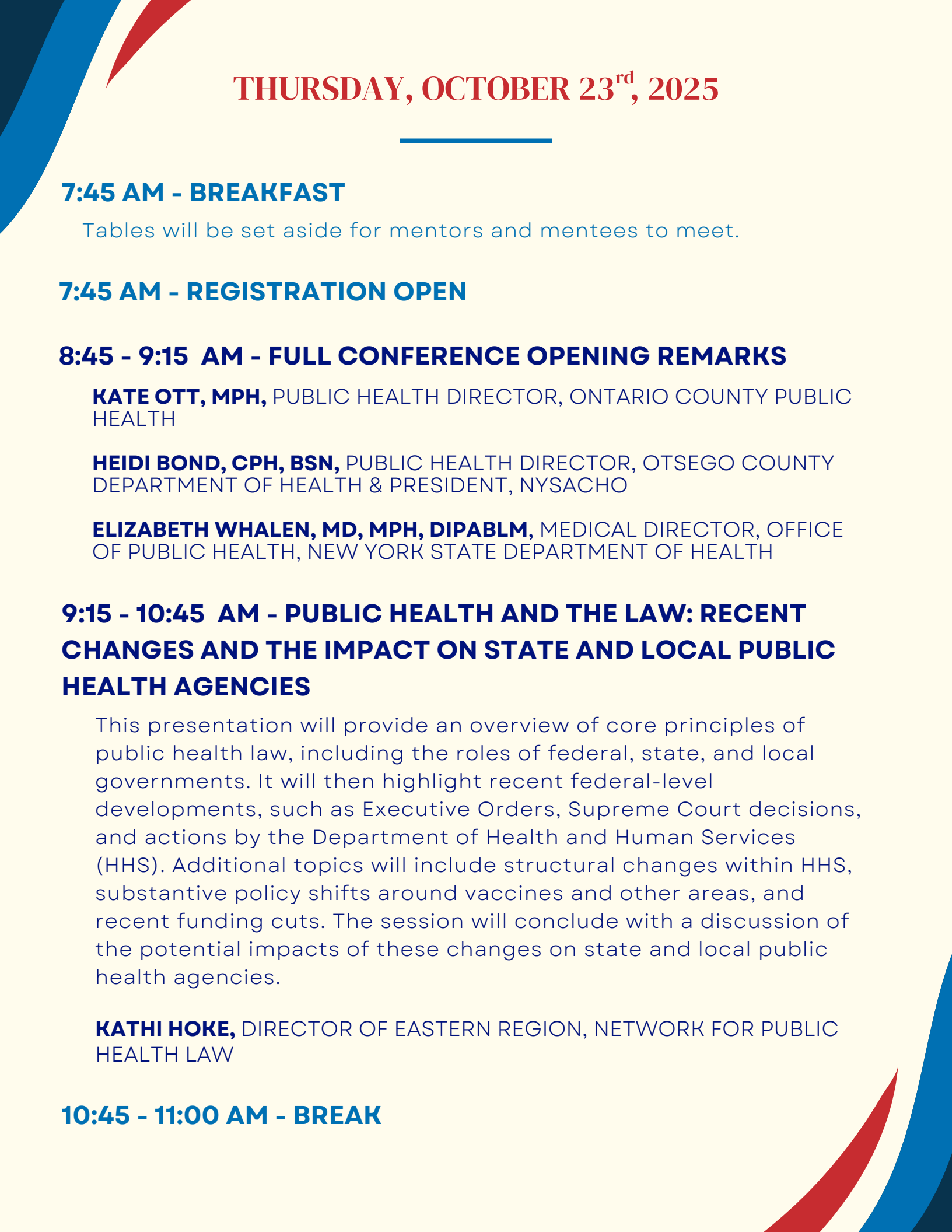
MODERATOR

MARY FRAN WACHUNAS, CPH, SPECIAL PROJECT EXECUTIVE, NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIALS & FORMER PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, RENSSELAER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

6:30 PM - DINNER

All conference meals are provided by the New York State Association of County Health Officials and included for all registered attendees.

Cash bar available.



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23rd, 2025

7:45 AM - BREAKFAST

Tables will be set aside for mentors and mentees to meet.

7:45 AM - REGISTRATION OPEN

8:45 - 9:15 AM - FULL CONFERENCE OPENING REMARKS

KATE OTT, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, ONTARIO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

HEIDI BOND, CPH, BSN, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, OTSEGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & PRESIDENT, NYSACHO

ELIZABETH WHALEN, MD, MPH, DIPABLM, MEDICAL DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

9:15 - 10:45 AM - PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE LAW: RECENT CHANGES AND THE IMPACT ON STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES

This presentation will provide an overview of core principles of public health law, including the roles of federal, state, and local governments. It will then highlight recent federal-level developments, such as Executive Orders, Supreme Court decisions, and actions by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Additional topics will include structural changes within HHS, substantive policy shifts around vaccines and other areas, and recent funding cuts. The session will conclude with a discussion of the potential impacts of these changes on state and local public health agencies.

KATHI HOKE, DIRECTOR OF EASTERN REGION, NETWORK FOR PUBLIC HEALTH LAW

10:45 - 11:00 AM - BREAK



11:00 AM - 12:30 PM - BUILDING AND SUSTAINING THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE (PANEL)

This panel will showcase innovative workforce development strategies from across New York State. County health departments and NYSDOH will share approaches to supporting and strengthening their teams, including wellness initiatives, trauma-informed workplace practices, professional development opportunities, employee engagement, and new recruitment pathways such as NY HELPS. Panelists will highlight practical tools and lessons learned that can help local health departments enhance staff retention, resilience, and growth.

INTRODUCTION

LAURA J. TROLIO, ACTING DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PANELISTS

ERICA BIRD, MPH, CPH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MADISON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

KEITH BROWN, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, SCHENECTADY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

VICTORIA MCGAHAN, MS, CHES, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, COLUMBIA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

RENEE RECCHIA, MPH, FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MICHELLE C. STEFANIK, MA, MPH CERT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH CONTINUING EDUCATION, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

GIANNA WOODARD, INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR, PATHWAYS TO PUBLIC HEALTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MODERATOR

SCOTT KING, MPH, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, SENECA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



12:30 - 1:30 PM - LUNCH

1:00 - 1:30 PM - EFFECTIVE TIME AND EFFORT REPORTING FOR ENHANCED ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE (PAID PARTNERSHIP)

This lunch-time session will provide a comprehensive overview of time and effort reporting under OMB Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and its critical role in strengthening organizational operations. Participants will explore how effective reporting practices can enhance operational efficiency, improve financial transparency, support strategic planning and performance monitoring, and maximize revenue through effective cost recovery.

JAMES PERAINO, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS, VENESKY & COMPANY

DOUG VENESKY, GENERAL MANAGER, VENESKY & COMPANY

1:30 - 3:30 PM - SCENARIO-BASED FRAMING: STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION THROUGH EVERYDAY CHALLENGES

Learn from your colleagues as you tackle real-world scenarios that require not just technical response, but leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. These situations highlight how public health leaders navigate complex dynamics, communicate effectively with diverse audiences, and leverage partnerships to create lasting impact.

FACILITATOR

NICO CONNOLLY, PRINCIPAL STRATEGIST, FRAMEWORKS INSTITUTE

3:30 - 3:45 PM - BREAK

3:45 - 5:00 PM -STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIP (PANEL)

This panel will showcase how innovative cross-sector partnerships are creating meaningful change in communities across New York State. Northwell Health and the Westchester County Department of Health are working together to expand access to life-saving colorectal cancer screenings. The Partnership for Ontario County is strengthening prevention, mental health, and youth development programs through a countywide collaborative model. And in Schoharie County, the Community Hub is bringing partners together around data-driven priorities to address local needs. Together, these initiatives illustrate the power of collaboration to improve health and well-being.

PANELISTS

SHERLITA AMLER, MD, MS, FAAP, COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH,
WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

RIAN RODRIGUEZ, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, PUTNAM COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

PARUL J. SHUKLA, MD, REGIONAL CHIEF OF COLON & RECTAL SURGERY,
NORTHWELL HEALTH

KATE OTT, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, ONTARIO COUNTY PUBLIC
HEALTH

GWEN VAN LAEKEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PARTNERSHIP FOR ONTARIO
COUNTY

NICOLE BLANCHARD, DRPH, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR,
SCHOHARIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MEGAN HAUGH, PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM SPECIALIST, SCHOHARIE
COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MODERATOR

JILLIAN M. BUMPUS, MBA, PSYD, WORKFORCE MANAGER, DIVISION OF
PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE, OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, NEW
YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

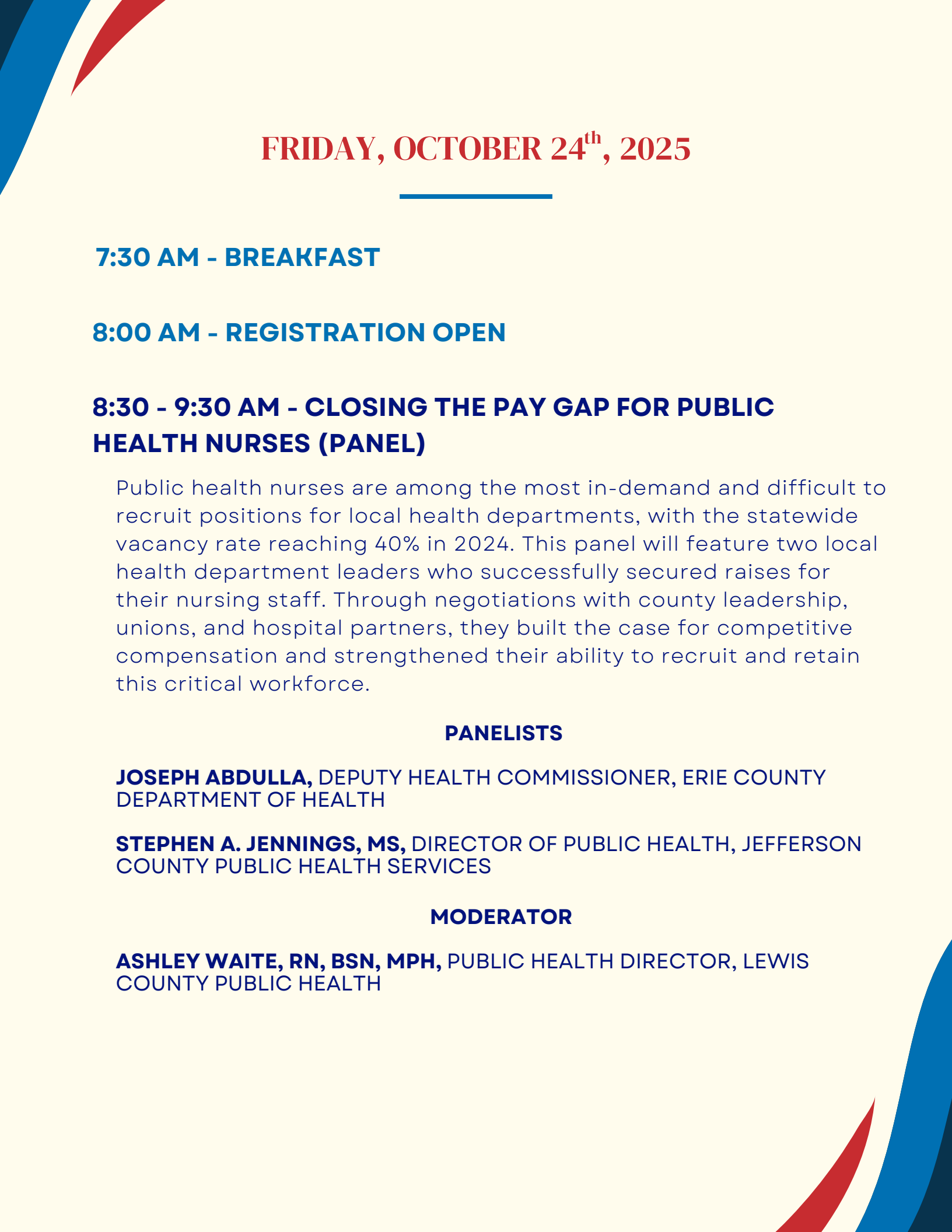
6:00 PM - NETWORKING

Open to all. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to join and take this opportunity to connect.

Cash bar available.

6:30 PM - DINNER & HALLOWEEN PARTY

Join us for an evening of food, fun, and festivities! The night will feature a Halloween-inspired costume contest and a talent show where spooky skills are encouraged. Come ready to celebrate, cheer on your colleagues, and show off your creativity!



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24th, 2025

7:30 AM - BREAKFAST

8:00 AM - REGISTRATION OPEN

**8:30 - 9:30 AM - CLOSING THE PAY GAP FOR PUBLIC
HEALTH NURSES (PANEL)**

Public health nurses are among the most in-demand and difficult to recruit positions for local health departments, with the statewide vacancy rate reaching 40% in 2024. This panel will feature two local health department leaders who successfully secured raises for their nursing staff. Through negotiations with county leadership, unions, and hospital partners, they built the case for competitive compensation and strengthened their ability to recruit and retain this critical workforce.

PANELISTS

JOSEPH ABDULLA, DEPUTY HEALTH COMMISSIONER, ERIE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

STEPHEN A. JENNINGS, MS, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, JEFFERSON
COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

MODERATOR

ASHLEY WAITE, RN, BSN, MPH, PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, LEWIS
COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH



9:30 - 10:30 AM -THE VIEW FROM WASHINGTON: THE FEDERAL POLICY LANDSCAPE AND ITS IMPACT ON LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH

This session will provide an update on recent policy developments in Washington and their potential impact on the work of local health departments. The latest research and resources from Trust for America's Health will be shared, along with strategies for effectively communicating the value of public health to policymakers.

DARA ALPERT LIEBERMAN, MPP, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS, TRUST FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH

10:30 AM - CLOSING REMARKS

MOLLY FLEMING, MPH, ASSOCIATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR -WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT, NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY HEALTH
OFFICIALS

10:30 - 11:00 AM - BREAK / CHECK OUT OF HOTEL

11:00 AM - GRAB BOXED LUNCH

11:00 - 12:30 PM - NYSACHO MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Closed Session - **Members Only** (see separate agenda)

VISIT OUR EVENT PAGE

**FOR SPEAKER BIOS, OUR EXHIBITOR
DIRECTORY, & OTHER EVENT MATERIALS**

SCAN ME



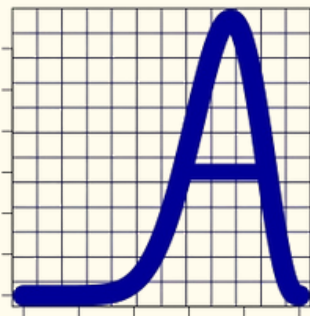
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