

# New York State Public Health Corps (NYSPHC)

## Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

Revised: February 25

### Overview of the NYSPHC Mentor:

Community-based volunteer Mentors serve as professional role models for NYSPHC Fellows and technical advisors beyond the classroom, facilitating their peer-learning and providing relevant mentoring, career planning and navigational support within the local public health landscape as they enhance their public health experience as a NYSPHC Fellow.

### NYSPHC Program Overview:

The purpose of the NYSPHC is to build public health capacity to support COVID-19 vaccination operations and help localities be better prepared to respond to future public health emergencies. The NYS Department of Health will work with local health departments (LHDs) and other partners within local public health networks to identify and train up to 1,000 Fellows to participate in the NYSPHC Program. Each NYSPHC Fellow will be assigned a Mentor; each Mentor would be assigned up to eight Fellows. Mentors are public health, allied health, and community-based professionals who have served or are currently serving the community. Mentors may self-nominate or be recruited by LHDs or their public health network partners.

### NYSPHC Program Components:

#### *Host Organizations and Placements:*

Fellows will be screened, hired, trained, and initially report to a LHD to be located either within the LHD or assigned to a “host” organization within the local public health network, based on the urgency/emergency in the county or community. Host Organizations<sup>1</sup> will directly supervise the day-to-day activities of the Fellows.

In addition to the host organization and site supervisor, the NYSPHC provides educational and professional support at the local and regional level.

#### *Local Public Health Partnerships:*

The purpose of the Local Public Health Partnership is to provide a collaborative opportunity for the LHD NYSPHC Local Coordinator and all NYSPHC Fellows & Mentors in the designated county to engage and have a shared program experience. The structure of the Local Public Health Partnership in each county will vary, this partnership could be a newly established collaborative or the expansion of existing LHD networks and partnerships by including NYSPHC Fellows and program Mentors. The Local Public Health Partnerships may be unique from county to county but will aim to facilitate professional growth activities among Fellows, including technical information about local public health priorities and support Fellows in identifying and sharing best practices.

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<sup>1</sup> Host Organizations would include, but not be limited to, the LHD, other local government agencies, Federally Qualified Health Centers, NYS Designated Rural Health Networks, and other Community-Based Organizations identified by NYSDOH.

### *Regional Public Health Consortiums:*

The Regional Public Health Consortium will be led by the designated regional Fellowship Placement Coordinator (FPC) and assemble participants of the Local Public Health Partnerships across the region including Local Coordinators (LCs), Fellows, and Mentors. The Regional Public Health Consortium will serve as a conduit to deliver program directed professional development experiences for the NYSPHC network of LCs, Fellows, and Mentors. These consortia will be a space to network, to share success stories and to brainstorm solutions to challenges.

### *Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)*

On a geographic basis, IHEs including Schools of Public Health and programs focused on public health, healthcare, allied health, and other disciplines that support public health efforts may support the NYSPHC to:

1. Aid LHDs in their identification and recruitment of Mentors.
2. Identify and nominate Fellows to the NYSPHC.
3. Serve as subject matter experts on critical public health topics and educational opportunities beyond the NYSPHC fellowship.
4. Assist Mentors in bridging the NYSPHC Fellow's classroom-based experience and academic discussions with their fellowship project work.

### *Mentor Benefits:*

The NYSPHC Mentor is a volunteer position with no financial compensation, however, Mentors will gain a great deal from participation in the program:

1. Direct influence and support of the development of the next generation of public health professionals.
2. Expanded public health network, locally and statewide fostering connectedness with peers and partnering organizations.
3. Networking opportunities with young professionals and future job seekers.
4. Access to educational materials, presentations, and collaboratives developed by or made available through the NYSPHC.
5. Remaining abreast of current events and technical updates relevant to the designated public health priorities.
6. Opportunity to share best practices and to learn about or hear from others in the field about best practices, emerging research, and public health topics.

### *Mentor Engagement:*

Mentors can engage with the program through the completion of the NYSPHC Mentor Nomination Form. Mentors can self-nominate, be nominated by a colleague, or recruited and nominated by an LHD or program partners including members of the Board of Health, NYS Medical Reserve Corps, Community Based Organizations, and others. Mentors should anticipate a term of approximately one-year to align with the expected one-year term of the Fellows. There may be opportunities to extend the Mentor term based on the needs of the LHD and the NYSPHC and desire of the Mentor to continue to participate.

### *Location:*

Mentor-Fellow assignments will occur in counties/communities across New York State where the Fellow and Mentor are best matched. Mentor responsibilities may in large part be carried out remotely, anticipating that opportunities for in-person meetings and collaboration will emerge.

#### Duties and Responsibilities:

Mentors are expected to hold themselves to the highest professional standards of ethical and respectful behavior. Mentor obligations and capacity are flexible but expected duties and responsibilities may include the following:

1. Completion of minimum onboarding requirements including workplace trainings as directed by the LHD. Onboarding requirements will be shared with the Mentor once selected by a LHD. We also strongly recommend Mentors consider completing the following trainings:
  - a. [Cornell University' Public Health Essentials Certificate Program: Module 0](#)
  - b. [NYS Citizen Public Health Leader Training Program](#)
2. Meet regularly, with the NYSPHC Fellow(s) assigned to them through in-person, online, or hybrid peer-learning sessions with the local NYSPHC Fellows.
  - a. Mentors are expected to be aware of and discuss Fellow progress in the required Cornell Public Health Essentials Certificate Program.
  - b. Trainings and other resources will be made available through the NYSPHC Training and Resources site for Mentors to draw topics and discussion points for these meetings.
3. Be available to Fellows assigned to them to provide support and communicate via email, telephone, or web meetings on an ad-hoc basis.
4. Be reasonably accessible to Fellows (not assigned to the Mentor) who may reach out through the NYSPHC directory located on the NYSPHC Training and Resources site. Networking as part of the NYSPHC is an expected benefit to Mentors and Fellows.
5. When possible, participate in Local Public Health Partnership Meetings and Regional Consortium Meetings. Opportunities to present or facilitate Local Public Health Partnership or Regional Consortium meetings may present themselves during the term of the mentorship.
6. Communicate as needed with local and program partners:
  - a. Regional Fellowship Placement Coordinator: to draw support for mentee meeting content and facilitation, completion of periodic mentee evaluations, and identify opportunities to participate in Regional Consortium Meetings.
  - b. Local Coordinator: to collaborate on professional development to be offered through the Local Public Health Partnership and support the identification and resolution of any professional development issues raised by Fellows.

#### Minimum Qualifications:

Mentors should have a background in public health or a related discipline and experience in working within or in collaboration to support public health efforts. This experience may include various public health related academic backgrounds and experience in local, state, or federal government, the private sector, hospital systems, or community-based organizations. NYSPHC Mentors should have a familiarity with the community in which they intend to serve as a mentor

and a connection to the public health network whether it be through collaboration or affiliation with the local health department, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, or healthcare systems. Among other public health related disciplines and areas of expertise, NYSPHC Mentors may have experience in one or many of the subject areas listed below:

Chronic Disease	Health Equity
Communicable Disease	Health Informatics/IT
Communications	Laboratory Sciences
Community Health	LGBTQ Health
Emergency Preparedness	Maternal and Child Health
Environmental Health	Mental Health
Epidemiology and Data	Outreach and Partnership Development
Family Health	Sexual Health
Harm Reduction and Substance Use	Vaccination and Testing
Health Education	

Mentors do NOT have to have experience or education in the Fellow's specific program assignment. Instead, supervisors are assigned to Fellows to onboard, train and oversee fellow activities to ensure deliverables, tasks, and standards are met.