

## Fellow Townhall Frequency Asked Questions

*This document will cover Frequently Asked Questions that were submitted to the New York State Public Health Corps both before and during the Fellow Townhall on Wednesday, March 27, from 12 PM to 1PM.*

*The Program Updates section below covers some of the changes in how the New York State Public Health Corps Fellowship Program will operate within the new iteration. Other program updates may be discussed in the responses to FAQs after the Eligibility Requirement section.*

- Program Updates
  - Fellows will be hired for a set two-year term, all starting in the same time period and ending on the same day.
  - Only full-time Fellowship opportunities will be offered.
  - There will be 200 positions throughout New York State for various host organizations, including community-based organizations, local health departments (LHDs), and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).
  - Each of the 200 Fellowship positions will be posted individually, and applicants will apply to individual positions. Positions will be posted on the Public Consulting Group's (PCG) website, and their subsidiary, Staffing Solutions Organization (SSO), LLC, will be the hiring entity for all positions.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT QUESTIONS

*The Eligibility Requirements section below will layout the requirements necessary to secure employment in the NYSPHC Fellowship Program. Following the section are responses to questions submitted to the NYSPHC Fellowship Program.*

- Eligibility Requirements
  - All current LHD Fellowship and Local Coordinator (LC) positions under the New York State Public Health Corps (NYSPHC) Fellowship Program will end on June 30, 2024.
  - All current NYSDOH Fellowships positions will end on July 31, 2024.
  - Current Fellows, Supervisors, and LCs who have been Fellows, Supervisors, and LCs for less than one year as of their end date will be eligible to reapply as Fellows in NYSPHC 2.0.
  - To ensure fairness, current Fellows, Supervisors, and LCs who reapply to be Fellows in 2.0 must follow the same application process as other candidates. Fellows, Supervisors, and LCs who are rehired must adhere to all 2.0 program requirements.
  - Funding to address the gap in employment between 6/30/24 and 8/5/24 for rehired fellows will be covered.
    - Current Fellows continuing in current position start date: July 1, 2024\*

### **1. With 2.0 can Fellows apply for any Fellow position, even outside of their current county or New York State Department of Health program?**

Yes, Fellows can apply for any position outside their current county or New York State Department of Health program if they meet the eligibility criteria outlined above.

- 2. If by the time June 30th arrives, and a fellow has worked at a LHD for just under one year, will NYSPHC 2.0 be for another full two years of one more year?**  
All Fellows hired under NYSPHC 2.0 will end on July 31, 2026. To be hired, a current Fellow must meet the eligibility requirements outlined above.
- 3. How will we know if our current placement will be an option for employment in PHC 2.0?**  
All 200 NYSPHC 2.0 fellowship projects will be posted to Staffing Solutions Organization's website.
- 4. So, I just want to clarify. I can reapply, but not with my current placement site if they have not been selected or notified to apply as a placement site?**  
If you meet the eligibility requirements outlined above, then you can apply for any of the positions posted on the Staffing Solutions Organization's website.
- 5. If a supervisor started out as a Fellow and then became a supervisor are they eligible for 2.0 as a fellow?**  
Refer to the eligibility requirements outlined above.
- 6. If positions are unable to be filled, will Fellows from the ineligible pool be able to apply then?**  
NYSPHC will consider all options if, and only if, the need is identified.
- 7. Can Fellows who have been with the program for over a year apply during the general application cycle (not the current Fellows application cycle)?**  
There is only one application cycle, which is anticipated to start on May 6, 2024 and close in June 2024.
- 8. If you apply to an open position but are not accepted for that position, are you eligible for other positions if you fit those qualifications?**  
Yes, applicants can apply for multiple positions within the Fellowship Program, regardless of county or NYSDOH program. To be considered for a position, applicants must meet the requirements written within each job description and have not been a current fellow for more than one year.
- 9. How was it determined that only those that have been a part of the fellowship for less than a year are eligible?**  
The NYSDOH solicited feedback from internal and external stakeholders, researched and reviewed program parameters for other state-based and federal fellowship programs, and assessed the program's mission and vision against length of participation. It was determined that those who had spent less than a year in the program had not had the opportunity to experience all the NYSPHC Fellowship Program components.
- 10. Is it a year in the program or a year with the Public Consulting Group (PCG)?**  
Current Fellows who have been with the Fellowship Program for less than one year will be eligible to reapply as Fellows in NYSPHC 2.0, regardless of how long they have worked with PCG on other projects.

**11. If one attends the graduation celebration on May 30, we would still be eligible to apply for PH 2.0 if eligible to apply?**

Yes, all current Fellows are invited to the graduation celebration. Participation in this event will not impact your ability to reapply.

**12. Some people are talking about a waiver. Can you address this?**

Some fellowship projects require a very specialized skillset or training, or the initiative was identified as a key initiative, and staff turnover would deter progress, the public's health, and the community. The feasibility of finding a fellow meeting the required qualifications during the upcoming recruitment period was considered, as was the necessity for continued professional development. In these instances, a waiver was approved by the NYSDOH.

**13. Even those who have received approvals for 2.0 per agency requests still need to apply?**

Yes, all candidates who wish to work in NYSPHC 2.0 will need to reapply.

## **HIRING QUESTIONS**

**14. If fellows are re-hired in their current role- the July 1 start date is optional? The other option is to start in August, correct?**

Yes, Fellows employed by local health departments or community-based organizations rehired in their current role can start with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) on July 1<sup>st</sup>; however, this is contingent on the application being completed by May 31<sup>st</sup> and passing a background check. They also have the option to start on August 5<sup>th</sup>. The preferred date of hire must be shared with the host organization and Public Consulting Group when accepting the employment offer. Current Fellows, beginning with a new host organization, will have an August 5<sup>th</sup> start date. All Fellows working at the New York State Department of Health will have an August 5<sup>th</sup> start date regardless of their current Fellow status.

**15. Can a Public Health Fellow I rise to a Public Health Fellow III?**

Yes, current Public Health Fellow I's can be hired at any level of Fellow based on the qualifications listed on the job description, and at the host organization's discretion.

**16. How many positions are available for this cycle?**

There will be a total of 200 available positions for this cycle of NYSPHC.

**17. Are you going to announce when it is open to reapply?**

All available job postings and positions will be available to view on [Staffing Solutions Organization's website](#) and [NYSPHC's external website](#) on May 6, 2024.

**18. When will hiring decisions be made?**

From June to July 2024, Fellows will be chosen for the 2024-2026 Fellowship cycle.

**19. When does the application for new fellows open?**

The new application is anticipated to launch on Monday, May 6, 2024.

**20. Is PCG expanding the counties you are working with for 2.0 with or are the job opportunities just with the counties on the list shared?**

PCG/Staffing Solutions Organization (SSO) will be the hiring entity for all positions in NSYPHC 2.0, not just those on the list, including Fellows working at the New York State Department of Health, local health departments, and other public health partner organizations.

**21. How many fellows have been allocated per county for 2.0?**

The number of positions allocated to counties is based on their size designation by the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO); however, counties could accept less than their allocation or request additional Fellows when opting into the program. Reallocation of Fellows was again based on NYSACHO county size designation. The New York State Department of Health was also designated Fellows.

**22. The application closes in June 2024, can the host organization start interviewing before that?**

Yes.

**23. But the program ends June 30<sup>th</sup> for Fellows at local health departments/community-based organizations, and July 31<sup>st</sup> for Fellows at the New York State Department of Health. Is there potential that fellows that want to stay on would not hear back from you before the end of the current program?**

Current Fellows who are eligible to reapply are encouraged to complete and submit their applications by May 31st. This ensures sufficient time to review applications, hold interviews, conduct a background check, and make an offer prior to the end of the current program.

**24. What are the qualifications for each Fellow Tier?**

- Fellow I
  - o At least one of the following:
    - One year of experience within a health, public health, education, human services, community-based organization, or institutional setting
    - One year of experience in administrative, personnel, fiscal, or other related operational activity
    - Associate's degree
  - o AND a current Fellow for less than one year by June 30, 2024, for LHD or CBO Fellows or July 31, 2024, for NYSDOH Fellows.
- Fellow II
  - o At least one of the following:
    - Two years of experience within a health, public health, education, human services, community-based organization, or institutional setting
    - Two years of experience in administrative, personnel, fiscal, or other related operational activity
    - Bachelor's degree
  - o AND a current Fellow for less than one year by June 30, 2024, for LHD or CBO Fellows or July 31, 2024, for NYSDOH Fellows.
- Fellow III
  - o At least one of the following:

- Three years of experience within a health, public health, education, human services, community-based organization, or institutional setting
- Three years of experience in administrative, personnel, fiscal, or other related operational activity
- Master's degree
- AND a current Fellow for less than one year by June 30, 2024, for LHD or CBO Fellows or July 31, 2024, for NYSDOH Fellows.

**25. Would the pay rate be determined based on which tier you are or one set rate for every Fellow?**

The pay rate per Fellow will be determined based on which 'Tier' as described in the job description.

- a. Public Health Fellow I
  - \$24 per hour
- Public Health Fellow II
  - \$29.50 per hour
- Public Health Fellow III
  - \$35 per hour

**26. If a position is remote and you live in a different county than the job is in can you apply for the position?**

Yes.

**27. How will the role of Local Coordinator be fulfilled going forward?**

PCG and the NYSPHC Regional Fellowship Placement Coordinator will share local coordinator responsibilities responsibilities.

**28. Will hiring be from the list of fellows that took the civil servant exam?**

No. Civil services exams are not required to apply for job openings in the NYSPHC Fellowship Program.

**29. Does the LHD post how many different tiers they would have per county/ department?**

The local health department will not be posting their open positions. Rather each Fellow position will have a unique posting on [Staffing Solutions Organization's website](#). These job postings will state the name of the host organization, the fellowship tier, the qualifications based on Fellow Tier Level, and a description of the fellowship project.

**30. What are the 7 focus areas?**

The seven NYSPHC fellowship focus areas are: Communications, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Epidemiology and Data, Laboratory, Policy Development, Program and Organizational Management, and Partnership Development

**31. Will the jobs be open to the public not just people that are currently in the fellowship under 1 year?**

Yes, the posted jobs will be open to the public for any interested candidates who would like to apply for the Fellowship positions.

**32. If re-hired, do we still go through the interview process?**

Yes.

**33. When will the list of host organizations and job postings be available?**

All job postings are expected to go live on Monday, May 6, 2024. For open positions, please refer to [Staffing Solutions Organization's hiring portal](#).

### **Orientation and Training**

**34. When and where is the 3–4-day orientation?**

NYSPHC will host a virtual orientation that will begin on August 6, 2024. The orientation will last several hours per day over four days.

**35. If a fellow already completed the Cornell course, is the other required Certificate Course similar (online, spaced over multiple weeks, etc.)? Is there more info about this?**

The NYSPHC Program is selecting another online course. It will feature the same format – online, spaced over multiple weeks. More specific information will be forthcoming.

**36. If you are enrolled in an MPH program, are you also required to participate in Cornell certificate course?**

Yes, if you are currently enrolled or have previously completed an MPH, you will be required to complete the Public Health Essentials (PHE) Certificate Program Course. If a Fellow reapplies to the NYSPHC program and had previously not taken PHE, they will be required to take PHE in NYSPHC 2.0 even if they previously had this requirement waived. If a Fellow reapplies to the NYSPHC program and has previously completed PHE, they will not be required to retake the course.

### **Start Dates**

**37. Can you discuss in further detail the July/August start date?**

Fellows rehired in their current role can start with the Public Consulting Group on July 1, 2024; however, this is contingent on the application being completed by May 31<sup>st</sup> and passing a background check. Those Fellows do have an option to start on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Fellows should notify PCG and their host organization about their preferred start date upon receiving their employment offer from PCG. Current Fellows starting in a new role with a new host organization will have an August 5<sup>th</sup> start date.

## Human Resources

**38. What is the difference in roles between the Public Consulting Group (PCG) and Staffing Solutions Organization LLC (SSO)?**

PCG and SSO take a collaborative approach to the Public Health Corps Project. The PCG project team oversees project activities, completing onboarding and collaborating with counties for the fellowship program. SSO is the employer of record and is responsible for all employment matters, including payroll processing, assigning and oversight of mandated training, mandatory employment paperwork and compliance, and human resources/employee resources items.

**39. Is there sick time Fellows earn? Is that determined by the hosting organization or PCG?**

SSO provides employees with ten days of personal time off (PTO) a calendar year that is accrued on a bi-weekly basis. This PTO encompasses the NYS requirement for sick leave, so no additional sick leave is accrued.

**40. Are employees separated from employment at the end of the fellowship eligible for unemployment?**

Employees separated from employment at the end of the fellowship may apply for unemployment benefits. SSO will not contest unemployment claims for these individuals.

**41. When do benefits begin, including 401k?**

SSO new hires are eligible for health and welfare benefits on the first of the month following their date of hire. They become eligible for 401k immediately upon hire.

**42. Who is responsible for approval of a pay raise for continuing fellows? The LHD or PCG?**

The hourly rate listed on the position description on Staffing Solutions Organization's website is the established rate for the two-year fellowship. The pay rate cannot be negotiated.

**43. Can PTO that is not used be cashed out when the positions end?**

Fellows should check with their employer of record for their policies and procedures around PTO. In terms of SSO's policies, yes, unused accrued PTO that remains at the time of separation of employment will be paid out in the last paycheck.

**44. Will health benefits end June 30th for fellows not moving to NYSPHC 2.0?**

Fellows should check with their employer of record for their policies and procedures around health benefits. In terms of SSO's policies, employees separating employment on June 30, 2024, will have health benefits ending effective this same date. They will be sent information to apply for COBRA.