

SPRING 2025



NYSPHC

NEWSLETTER



Dear NYSPHC Fellows and Program Partners,

Welcome to the NYSPHC Newsletter! We're grateful to have this space to connect with you, share updates, and offer support as we work through this time together. On April 1, New York and a coalition of 22 other states and the District of Columbia filed a federal lawsuit against the Trump administration for terminating billions of dollars in state health grant funding. The coalition asked that the court immediately stop the Administration from rescinding the funding and prevent the breakdown of crucial health services. On April 5, the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island issued a Temporary Restraining Order barring the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from terminating the public health grants allocated to the coalition states. On April 16th, New York, as well as 23 other jurisdictions argued our case in front of Judge Mary McElroy in the United States District Court in Rhode Island regarding the motion for a preliminary injunction for the 3 grants. While the judge has not yet decided whether a preliminary injunction should be issued, the temporary restraining order will remain in place at least until April 29th. This is encouraging, hopefully we will earn a preliminary injunction and can complete our important work until the planned end of this grant in 2026.

On April 23, 2025, we held a town hall to provide an informed update about the next steps for the program. We plan to communicate any further changes as appropriate. If you have any unanswered questions, we encourage you to email them to NYSPublicHealthCorps@health.ny.gov

During these uncertain times, we will use this newsletter as a resource to share timely updates and relevant tools that are responsive to the evolving needs of fellows. Our commitment is to ensure that you continue to feel supported, informed, and empowered as we navigate this period together. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding.

~ NYSPHC Team

Resources and Tools

NYSPHC Training and Resources Website

Access Fellow Resources such as:

- [Public Health Careers](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Mentor Directory](#)

PCG Resources

- Find all your PCG/SSO resources here. If you come across a question you don't know the answer to, be sure to reach out to your PCG representative for assistance.

Connect with Us on LinkedIn

- Stay connected and engage with other NYSPHC fellows and public health professionals.

The NYSPHC Fellow Directory

Connect with peers & expand your professional network!

Create a profile [here](#).

To provide additional contact information to an existing profile [here](#).



Fellow Directory

Upcoming Events

Stay informed about upcoming public health events!

Check out the [Events Calendar](#) on the NYSPHC Training and Resources Page.

Attend the NYS Department of Labor's Virtual Workshops!

Upcoming workshops:

- **4/23 11-12 pm:** [Social Media Strategies- Job Search](#)
- **4/23 1-2:30 pm:** [Interviewing Techniques](#)
- **4/23 1-3 pm:** [Job Transition and What it Means for You](#)
- **4/28 11-12 pm:** [Networking](#)
- **4/30 1-2 pm:** [Managing Stress During the Job Search](#)



To see a full list of both in-person and virtual Department of Labor events, [click here](#).

Career Corner

Job Search Resources:

- ★ [State-funded jobs with the New York State Department of Health \(NYSDOH\)](#)
- ★ [Health Research Inc: Grant-funded jobs with NYSDOH](#)
- ★ [New York State Association of County Health Officials \(NYSACHO\) job board](#)
- ★ [State Jobs NY](#)
- ★ [The CDC Foundation:](#)
- ★ [New York State Job Bank Online Posting Board](#)
- ★ [The Emory public health job bank](#)
- ★ [The job list at Epidemiology Monitor](#)
- ★ [Career Mobility Services](#)
- ★ [Regional Career Center Locations](#)
- ★ [New York State Virtual Career Center](#)
- ★ [New York State Career Center Events and Recruitments](#)



Additional Resources & Guidance

Check out NYSPHC's [Public Health Career](#) page for more information & resources including:

- Charting your public health career path
- Writing cover letters
- Interviewing
- Transferable skills
- Salary negotiation skills
- Stories, inspiration, and guidance to build your dream public health career





Health & Wellness Tips and Resources

Maintaining well-being is essential for success. Spring offers an ideal opportunity to get outside and boost your health. Outdoor exercise increases vitamin D, improves cardiovascular fitness, and reduces stress by lowering cortisol levels. Just 20–30 minutes in nature can enhance mood, support immune function, and promote overall well-being.

Leaning on your community and support network can be a powerful way to care for yourself. Staying connected with others helps ease emotional strain, offers perspective, and reminds you that you're not alone. Taking action by reaching out—whether for a conversation, a helping hand, or simply to be heard—can strengthen your resilience and gently support your overall well-being.

Resources:

- Get in touch with your **SSO EAP** and book an appointment to speak with a counselor for complimentary support services
- Check out our new tab in the T&R website for **Mental Health Resources**
- **ENERGY Magazine** - Spring 2025 issue
 - Led by volunteer Energy Influencers across the Office of Public Health, a collection of employee resources and information, designed to promote organizational and employee health and wellness while supporting equitable access for Public Health employees.

Public Health Perspectives: Trends, Case Studies & News

Health News right to your email

- Sign up for tailored Health News stories to make sure you're keeping up with Public Health in the News

Global Health Update Report

- This weekly report from the New York State Department of Health presents summaries of select ongoing and emerging infectious disease outbreaks of interest to public health professionals and the public, both globally and in the United States.



ALUMNI CORNER



AVINASH LEKRAM, MPH

I currently serve as a Senior Health Program Coordinator within the Bureau of Child Health in the Division of Family Health. In this role, I work alongside an incredible team to develop an adolescent mental health campaign aimed at promoting accessible mental health services and destigmatizing mental health challenges among youth in New York State. Additionally, my team and I are also creating a youth advisory group for the Division of Family Health. This initiative will give youth a direct platform to provide input, ensuring that our programs and policies align with their unique perspectives and lived experiences. It's inspiring work that reminds me why I entered public health in the first place.

One meaningful project that I'm proud of is editing and redesigning the New York State Sexual Assault Victims Bill of Rights. The goal of this project was to make sure survivors could easily understand their rights in a clear and accessible way. This was about giving survivors a tool to empower themselves, and that made the work deeply personal and rewarding. Knowing that the final product will soon be published and available for survivors across the state fills me with pride.

The fellowship program truly opened the door to my career in public health. It gave me the chance to meet some of the most brilliant and passionate individuals I've ever known, including social workers, physicians, nurses, and public health professionals with similar educational backgrounds. These connections were instrumental in helping me navigate the complexities of state systems and find my footing in a challenging but rewarding field. The fellowship also gave me opportunities to develop invaluable skills, such as networking, project management, and effective communication. Whether I was learning from mentors or peers, their expertise and willingness to guide me have been crucial to my growth, and I'm so grateful for the relationships I built during that time. The fellowship community played a significant role in my personal and professional growth. My mentors, peers, and program directors provided a safe space to voice concerns and frustrations, which taught me the importance of clear communication and advocacy in the workplace. I learned about various public health programs and systems, expanding my connections both within and outside the fellowship and the New York State Department of Health.

To anyone just starting their journey in public health: give yourself grace. Reflect on your accomplishments and take pride in what you've achieved—even the small victories. When you feel lost or stuck, those reflections can help you reconnect with your purpose and remind you of the bigger picture. It's also important to network and make connections. Don't be afraid to ask questions or admit when you don't know something—it's okay, and everyone starts somewhere. The relationships you build and the curiosity you show will take you far. Public health can feel overwhelming at times, but it's worth it. Remember that you're a part of something bigger than yourself, and your work has the power to create lasting change.



MENTOR SPOTLIGHT- RACHEL CICIGLINE



Can you tell us a little about your background and what led you to pursue a career in public health?

My background is pretty diverse, but my career has always involved public health in some way. I spent several years working in health care, and also as a certified personal trainer and business owner. But I discovered a love of environmental health when I went back to school for my Biology degree. After school, I worked in environmental consulting, specifically with environmental compliance and asbestos projects, but I was always drawn to the safety and health of water. When an opportunity came up to work in the Bureau of Water Supply Protection in the Center for Environmental Health, I jumped on it!

What professional accomplishments or projects are you most proud of in your career?

I have really enjoyed being a mentor for NYSPHC and also for the Task Force for Women's Initiatives' Mentor Program. Knowledge and skills are meant to be shared, and being able to help new public health professionals has been very rewarding.

What do you hope your fellows take away from their experience through the mentorship?

I hope they are able to take away the importance of networking. Someone always knows someone willing to connect about a topic of interest! All you have to do is ask.

What is one aspect of public health do you think is overlooked or underappreciated?

Communication. A train won't move seamlessly if its cars aren't connected properly. Good communication is the connective piece in public health. Without it, the mission gets derailed.

What do you believe is the most important lesson the fellows can take away as they navigate their career paths in public health?

Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. It's normal to be scared and nervous to try new things, especially things we are unfamiliar with, but that's where the most growth happens. Then the next thing you know, you're sharing your own story about how you were so glad you took a chance!

Fellow Impact

Since its inception in 2021, the NYSPHC program has grown and evolved significantly. We have hired **825 fellows** across **55 counties**, with placements in local and state health departments, as well as important community-based organizations.

NYSPHC fellows have made remarkable contributions at their host organizations and within their communities. Based on feedback from fellows, supervisors, and host organizations, we recognize how important the fellowship has been to you. Therefore, we'd like to offer an opportunity for you to share how the fellowship has impacted you as we near the close of the program.

If you'd like to share what being a fellow has meant to you, or what having fellows has meant to your organization, please visit [this form](#).



Dear NYSPHC Fellows,

These last few weeks have been like no other in my public health career. The sudden termination of several federal grants has left me feeling so many things, confused, frustrated, concerned about the future of public health not just in New York but across the country and world. But most of all I have felt sad. Sad that your fellowship journey, and this Fellowship Program, is ending so soon. The work you have accomplished these last few months is beyond impressive, it's inspiring, and you should be beyond proud of what you have accomplished. Your work will have a lasting impact in the communities you serve. On behalf of the entire NYSPHC Team, thank you for your service!

I know these last few weeks have been extremely hard. If you have felt unheard or unseen, I'm sorry. Know that I do hear you; I do see you. I am working on getting communications and updates out to you faster. The NYSPHC Team is also working hard on making resources available to you. If there is something you are looking for, let us know.

Uncertainty remains in the weeks ahead, but we will get through this. Public health will persevere. Please take care of yourself and let us know if you need anything.,

Sincerely,

Erin C. Knoerl
Director, New York State
Public Health Fellowship Program