

# 2025 Public Health Learning Forum

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# Welcome!

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# Welcome to PHLF

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# Welcome from the PHF Board of Directors

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**Joe Finkbonner**

Chair, Board of Directors  
Public Health Foundation

# We Talk, We Rise

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## Jennifer Medina Matsuki

Director, Public Health Partnerships and Initiatives  
Pfizer

# Bridges in Action: Continuing the Work of State and Local Partnerships



**Taban Herrington**

Chief of Staff  
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services



**James R. House**

Workforce Director  
Kentucky Department for Public Health



**Billy Pitts**

Chairman of the Training Committee  
Kentucky Health Departments Association



# *Bridges in Action: Continuing the Work of State and Local Partnerships*

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Chief of Staff

Cabinet for Health and Family Services

James R. House, B.S., MEP

Workforce Director

Kentucky Department for Public Health

Billy Pitts, MHA, MHR

Chair, Training Committee

Kentucky Health Departments Association

**November 18, 2025**



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# Objectives

- Explain how Kentucky is utilizing funding from the Public Health Infrastructure Grant (PHIG) to develop and implement workforce development (WFD) initiatives and programs for the state and local public health workforce.
- Describe how local, state and federal organizations are working together to recruit, hire, retain, sustain and train a competent and diverse response-ready public health workforce through different public health career pathways.
- Identify the best practices that contributed to the development and success of Kentucky's state and local workforce development (WFD) programs.

# Overview of Public Health in Kentucky

- **Kentucky**
  - **Population:** 4,505,836 (*2020 Decennial Census*)
  - **Counties:** x 120, mostly rural with highest populations in Louisville, Lexington and Bowling Green.
  - **Bordering States x 7:** IN, OH, WV, VA, TN, MO and IL
- **Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) - Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS)**
  - **Organization:** Commissioner's Office + seven divisions with over 900 employees
  - **Mission:** To improve the health and safety of people in Kentucky through prevention, promotion and protection.
- **Kentucky's Local Health Departments (LHD) x 61:** Single County x 44, Districts x 14 and Independent x three with over 2800 employees.

# Culture of Public Health in Kentucky

- **Invest in Partnerships and Collaborations**
- **Provide Leadership Training Opportunities**
  - Kentucky Enhancing Excellence in Public Health Leaders (KEEPH)
  - Kentucky Public Health Emerging Leadership Institute (KY-PHELI)
  - Professional Development Training
- **Conduct Self-Assessments**
  - DISC Assessments
  - CliftonStrengths Assessment
  - Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) 360
- **Tell Our “Public Health” Story**



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# Public Health Workforce Readiness Branch

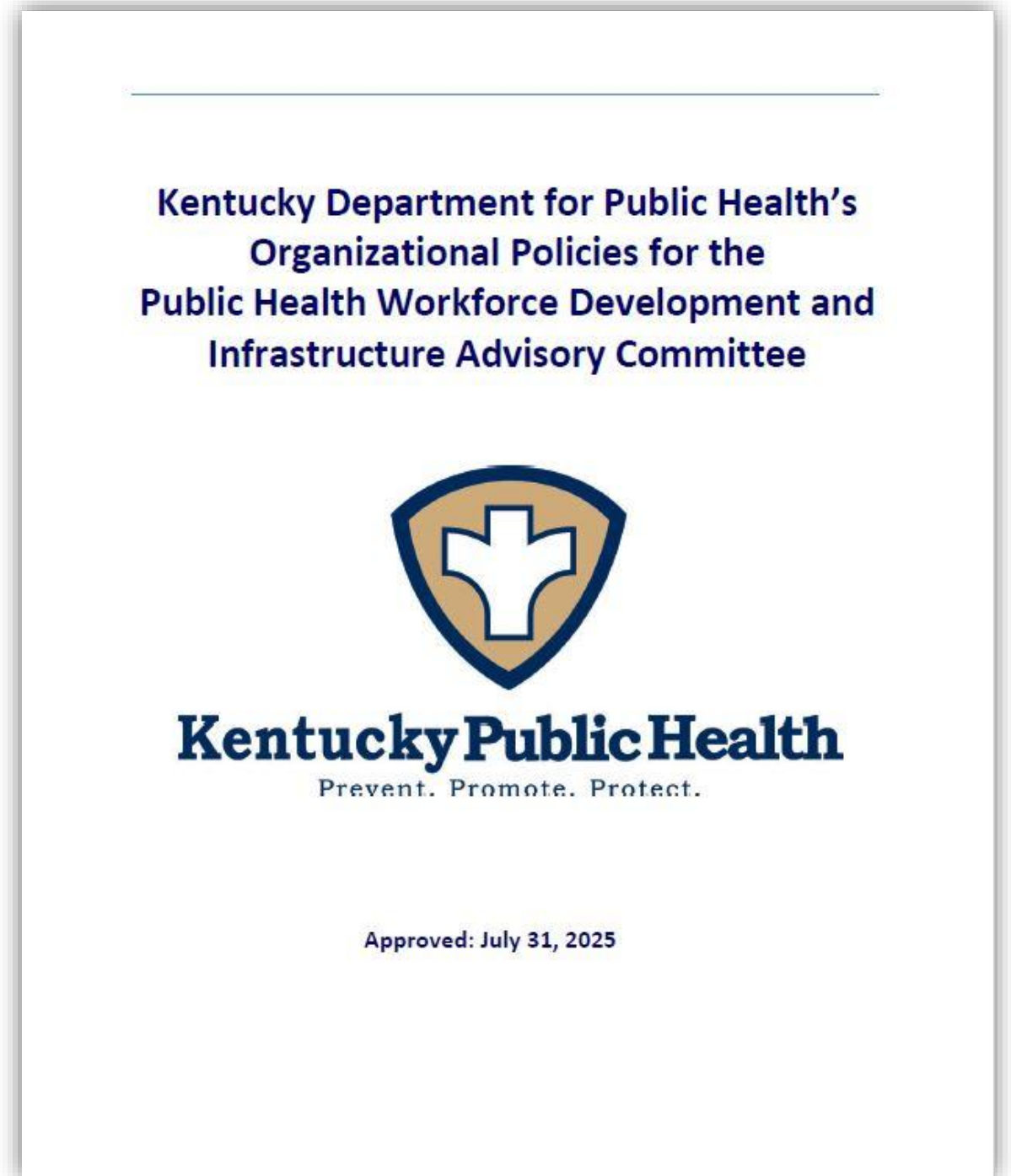
- **Goal:** Recruit, Hire, Retain, Sustain and Train a competent and diverse response-ready public health workforce through public health career pathways.
- **Staffing:** Nine Employees + Three Interns
- **Partner with the Federal Grants Administration Team**
  - Grant Documentation and Reporting
  - Budget and Expenditure Tracking
  - GrantSolutions Reporting

**Public Health Workforce Readiness Branch**  
KDPH Division of Public Health Protection and Safety (PHPS) - 11/16/2025

<b>Administrative Specialist Senior</b> February 17, 2025 Savanna Clark	<b>Human Svcs Prog Branch Manager</b> November 16, 2025/December 16, 2021 James House	<b>Facilitation Program Admin.</b> January 3, 2022/January 2, 2025 Lindsey Brewer
<b>PH Workforce Education Section</b>	<b>Grants Program Evaluator</b> April 5, 2023 Kirstin King	<b>PH Student Education Section</b>
<b>PH Workforce Education Sect Sup</b> January 18, 2022/March 1, 2025 Deena Bell	<b>Student Interns</b>	<b>Student Intern</b> June 3, 2024 Erin McIntosh
<b>LHD Workforce Trng Prgm Admin</b> May 1, 2023 Ashley Carroll	<b>PH Student Education Section Sup</b> June 30, 2022/March 1, 2025 Madison (Maddie) Yerges	<b>Student Intern</b> June 2, 2025 Shreya Chandrashekar
<b>Education Program Coordinator</b> January 16, 2025/March 1, 2023 Karen Lencki	<b>Student Internship Program Admin</b> January 2, 2025 Amy Winger	<b>Student Intern</b> June 2, 2025 Isabella Skibba

# Public Health WFD and Infrastructure Advisory Committee

- **Purpose:** Provide guidance to recruit, hire, retain, sustain and train a public health workforce that can support current and future public health programs and build stronger programs for the future.
- **Membership:** Senior leadership from:
  - KY Department for Public Health (KDPH)
  - KY Health Departments Association (KHDA)
  - Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS)
- **Subcommittees**
  - Public Health Workforce Readiness
  - Foundational Health



Organization Policies Approved July 31, 2025

# Public Health Workforce Readiness Subcommittee

- **Purpose:** Develop/implement programs that support recruiting, hiring, retaining, sustaining and training of a competent and diverse response-ready public health workforce.
- **Membership:** Program leaders from KDPH, KHDA, Kentucky Public Health Association and Kentucky's Academic Institutions x 13.
- **Workgroups**
  - Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
  - Community Partnerships
  - Marketing and Communications
  - Student Engagement
  - Training and Development



# Academic Partnerships

## Memorandums of Agreement (MOA)

1. Bellarmine University
2. Eastern Kentucky University
3. KY Community and Technical College System
4. Kentucky State University
5. Murray State University
6. University of Kentucky
7. University of Louisville
8. University of Pikeville
9. Western Kentucky University

## Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

1. Bellarmine University
2. Eastern Kentucky University
3. KY Community and Technical College System
4. Kentucky State University
5. Midway University
6. Murray State University
7. Northern Kentucky University
8. Simmons College of Kentucky
9. Thomas More University
10. University of Kentucky
11. University of Louisville
12. University of Pikeville
13. Western Kentucky University

# KDPH Public Health Career Pathways

- **Kentucky Public Health Exploration Program (KY-PHEP)** - since June 2022
  - Provided public health career information at 34 events to over 3428 high school students
  - Conducted eight experiential learning opportunities for 322 students and 70 + educators
- **Student Internship Program** - since January 2022
  - Hosted 158 student interns – nine have been hired by KDPH!
  - Conducted eight experiential learning opportunities for 400 students
- **Employee Learning and Development Program** – since February 2022
  - Professional Development: Employees have participated in over 2242 professional training sessions
  - Tuition Assistance Program: 55 employees have participated – eight have earned a degree and/or completed a certificate program.

# KHDA and KDPH Partnership – 2024/2025

## Workforce Readiness Project

- CDC Cooperative Agreement x \$4 million
- Outcomes:
  - **32** LHDs received funding from KHDA to use on tuition assistance, professional development training, and/or student interns
  - **90+** LHD staff received tuition assistance
  - **23** LHD student interns were funded
  - **226** training opportunities were conducted
  - **1,342** LHD employees completed training opportunities
- In 2025, PHIG funds will also be used to support LHD Special projects.

## Shared Service Projects

- PHIG Funding x \$400,000 per year
- Outcomes:
  - **120** memberships - Kentucky Association for Local Board of Health (KALBOH)
  - **16** KHDA regional meetings
  - **61** LHDs participated in a Data Inventory and Needs Assessment
  - New [KHDA Website](#) developed.
  - Established mySidewalk contract for LHDs

# LHD Workforce Capacity Support – PHIG Funding

## Program Foundational 6000 Funding (PGF 6000)

- Purpose: Support LHD Workforce Capacity and meet Public Health Transformation Regulations.
- Top activities supported: - July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025
  - Recruiting, hiring or sustaining of LHD personnel
  - External support to assist with Community Health Assessments (CHA), Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) and Strategic Planning
  - Core and Foundational Public Health Programs
  - Training and Outreach Programs
  - Workforce engagement, well-being and other related programs and services

# Leadership Development Programs

- **Kentucky Public Health Emerging Leadership Institute (KY-PHELI)**
  - Partnership: Region IV Public Health Training Center
  - Audience: Emerging Public Health Leaders
- **Kentucky Enhancing Excellence in Public Health Leaders (KEEPH)**
  - Partnership: Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
  - Audience: Senior Public Health Leaders
- **CliftonStrengths (Strengths-Based Organization)**
  - CliftonStrengths sessions are offered to staff, student interns and university students.



# Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

1. **Workplan Monitoring and Documentation:** Workplans are monitored by the Grants Program Evaluator through collaboration with the Workforce Director and Program Leads.
2. **Assessments/Surveys**
  - a. Public Health Workforce Pulse Check Surveys – sent to DPH Staff every six months to support KDPH’s Strategic Plan “People Priority”.
  - b. Core Competency Assessments for KDPH: Completed in October 2024 through Technical Assistance by the Public Health Foundation.
  - c. Public Health Workforce Impact Survey: Completed in October 2024/2025 by persons who participated in the Public Health Career Pathways Program
  - d. Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS) for KDPH: KDPH = 46% Response Rate / LHDs = 49% Response Rate

# Moving Forward

- Establishing a Public Health Career Services Center
- Scheduling the first New to Public Health Residency Program Cohort
- Developing a LHD Training Calendar Website
- Developing Supervisor Training Sessions for Public Health Employees
- Completing the first Certification in Public Health (CPH) Cohort
- Training on how to “Tell Our Story”

**Sustain Workforce Development Initiatives and Programs**



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# Questions?

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# Thank You for Joining Us

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Next Session:

**Laying the Groundwork:  
Essentials of Public Health  
Workforce Development**

Tuesday, November 18, 2025  
2:30–4:00pm EST

