

# THE JOURNAL OF LAW, MEDICINE & ETHICS

Special Supplement to Volume 54:1 • Spring 2026

A Journal of the American Society of Law, Medicine & Ethics • www.aslme.org



## 2025 Public Health Law Conference: Connection. Collaboration. Community.

### Symposium Articles

- 1 **2025 Public Health Law Conference: Connection. Collaboration. Community.**  
*Quang Huu Dang*
- 3 **Health & Democracy: Democratizing Community Health Assessments**  
*Jeanne Ayers, Gnora Mahs, Margarita Northrop, and Jeannette Raymond*
- 10 **Trust, Transparency, and the Fragile Promise of Data Governance in the Era of Modernization**  
*Fallon Julia Cochlin, Regen Weber-Fares, Jami Crespo, William Sage, and Cason Daniel Schmit*

## Key Learnings and Themes from the Public Health Law Conference: The Symposium Issue of the *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*

In September 2025, the Network for Public Health Law organized the Public Health Law Conference in Seattle Washington. The conference theme—Connection. Collaboration. Community.—acknowledged this critical time in public health—a time when survival and progress both require working together to navigate an increasingly hostile law and policy environment. Plenaries and sessions at the conference examined the challenges and opportunities in our continued work to protect the health of communities across the country. The recently published symposium issue of the *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* is dedicated to an examination of some of the critical topics discussed at the conference. [Read the full article.](#)

---

### Law & Policy Insights



## **Tracking the Public Health Impacts of Federal Executive Orders**

Donald Trump signed 230 executive orders (EOs) last year, a good number of which impacted critical areas of public health. What occurred in 2025 were sustained, high-velocity disruptions to the infrastructure that makes public health policy possible. As expected, these disruptions were not evenly distributed and landed most heavily on communities already experiencing the greatest health inequities. The Network's newly launched Executive Order Watch tracks the broad range of public health issues affected by EOs, including equity, the environment, immigration and reproductive health.

---

## **Resources**



### **Navigating the Information Blocking Rule when Protecting Reproductive Health Privacy: Q&A**

Reproductive health information is often highly sensitive, and its disclosure and misuse can have harmful consequences, such as stigma, harassment, criminalization, and barriers to care. In a nation increasingly hostile to reproductive rights, health care providers, health departments, and others may seek to protect the confidentiality of reproductive health information that they hold. This resource aims to support these entities in understanding and navigating considerations related to the federal Information Blocking Rule governing the availability of certain health data.

---

## **Law & Policy Spotlight**



### **Health Information and Data Sharing**

At a time when reproductive health information is increasingly at risk of being used to undermine reproductive health care access, understanding and navigating the web of evolving legal requirements in this area is crucial for advancing reproductive justice and equity. Network attorneys are available to consult with policymakers, advocates, health care providers, and others on these issues at no cost. If you are looking to understand and leverage legal tools to protect the privacy of reproductive health information and other types of sensitive data, contact [Emma Kaeser](#), Staff Attorney, Mid-States Region for more information.

---

## Webinar



### [2026 Racial Health Equity Legal and Policy Cohort Informational Webinar](#)

May 7, 2026 | 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. CT

The Network's Racial Health Equity Legal and Policy Cohort (RHE Cohort) is a comprehensive legal technical assistance opportunity that helps public health departments, community organizations, and advocates strategically use the power of law and policy to advance their racial health equity goals through tailored one-on-one support, training, and peer learning. Join us for a webinar to learn more about the Cohort program and how to apply.

---

## Announcements

### [The Indian Health System: the Role of State and Local Partners in Advancing Tribal Health Equity](#)

May 18th 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. CST

Join us for the next Network Equity Officer Peer Group Learning Session where we will be joined by the National Indian Health Board's Chief Executive Officer, A.C. Locklear II, who will introduce the foundations of the Indian health system: what it is, why it exists, and how it is tied to Tribal sovereignty. You will also obtain an understanding of the role of state and local partners in the Indian health system and how you can support Tribal priorities and progress health equity.

If you currently work in a state, Tribal, local, or territorial government working to promote equity, you can request to join the Equity Officer Peer Group and receive a registration link, [here](#).

### [Join the Conversation: Take Our Three-Question Survey](#)

In 2025, the Network commissioned Frey Evaluation, LLC to conduct focus groups to learn how the needs of those in the field have changed in light of the current climate and how the Network can respond to help meet those needs. We recently reported on the results of those [focus groups](#) and we are moving forward based on the recommendations that resulted from our conversations with those on the front lines of public health. We invite you to [take our brief survey](#), which will help us determine how best to develop, structure, and provide new opportunities for learning, support, and connection.

---

## Worth Sharing

### [Data Across Sectors for Health Knowledge Base](#)

April 22, 2026 10:00 am - 11:00 am CST

The DASH Knowledge Base (DKB) is a publicly accessible online database of resources related to health equity, data sharing, community power, and more. In this webinar, the Data Across Sectors for Health staff will go through the DKB's features and how to use them and speakers from the Network will present the database's collection of legal resources, followed by a Q&A.

## APHA Policy Action Institute

June 9-10, 2026 Arlington, Virginia

The 2026 Policy Action Institute will take place June 9-10 at the Hilton Arlington National Landing and online. Through panels, hands-on workshops and networking sessions with top public health policymakers, attendees will learn how to navigate funding cuts, influence policy to drive change and secure critical resources for their initiatives. There will be an optional Hill Day on June 11, where participants will be given the opportunity to meet directly with policymakers and their staff and advocate for public health priorities.

### Tell Us What You're Working On.

### We're Ready to Help.

REQUEST  
ASSISTANCE

Network attorneys can provide consultation and guidance to:

- Identify the ways in which laws and policies may or may not impact a particular project or community; or the potential impact on different populations within a community.
- Provide examples of and compare public health laws or policy strategies from other jurisdictions.
- Analyze the legal authority to implement a policy or law, or reforms.
- Apply equity tools to laws and policies.

### Thank you!

Your interest in the work of the Network is important. Together, we can advance law as a tool to improve public health. **Please forward the Network Report and encourage others to [join the Network!](#)**

*The Network for Public Health Law provides information and technical assistance on issues related to public health. The legal information and assistance provided in this document does not constitute legal advice or legal representation. For legal advice, readers should consult a lawyer in their state.*



**Our Contact Information**  
**Network for Public Health Law**  
**7101 York Avenue South, #270**  
**Edina, MN 55435**

*You are receiving this email because you signed up to receive Network communications, or you attended a Network event or webinar. If you no longer wish to receive this email you can manage your preferences below.*