

Kentucky Health Department Leadership Case Stories

Guidance for Participants

As part of the September 24, 2026 session on “**Public Health Communications in a Complex Environment**” at the annual KHDA Leadership Retreat, we invite you to prepare a brief case story about a challenge, opportunity, or success your health department has recently experienced.

The purpose is not to evaluate your response or identify a "right" answer. Instead, these stories will provide real-world examples that we will use during the retreat to facilitate discussion, shared learning, and collaborative problem-solving among health department leaders.

Please focus on a situation that required leadership, decision-making, communication, collaboration, innovation, or strategic thinking. The issue may still be ongoing.

Examples include:

- Responding to an emerging public health issue
- Managing budget reductions or staffing shortages
- Building a new community partnership
- Addressing political or governance challenges
- Communicating the value of public health to elected officials
- Implementing a new program or service
- Navigating a crisis or emergency response
- Using data to inform decision-making
- Improving organizational culture or workforce engagement
- Developing an innovative solution to a local challenge
- Achieving an unexpected success that others could learn from

Submission Guidelines

- **Length:** 1–2 pages
- **Format:** Narrative (bullet points are welcome where helpful)
- **Audience:** Fellow local public health leaders
- **Due Date:** August 15, 2026

Leadership Case Story Template

1. Title

Provide a brief title that captures the issue or opportunity.

2. Background

Provide a brief description of your community and the context.

- What county or district are you serving?
- What made this issue important?
- Who was affected?

3. The Challenge or Opportunity

Describe the situation.

- What happened?
- Why was it challenging?
- What decisions needed to be made?
- What constraints or barriers existed?

4. Your Response

Describe how your organization responded.

Consider discussing:

- Leadership decisions
- Partnerships
- Communication strategies
- Policy changes
- Resource allocation
- Staff engagement
- Community involvement
- Innovative approaches

5. Results

What happened?

- What worked well?
- What did not work as expected?
- What outcomes did you observe?
- If the issue is ongoing, where does it stand today?

6. Reflections

Looking back:

- What lessons did you learn?
- What would you do differently?
- What advice would you offer another health department facing a similar situation?

Discussion Questions

Please conclude your case story with 2–3 questions you would like fellow health department leaders to discuss during the retreat.

Examples include:

- How would you have approached this situation?
- What additional strategies should we consider?
- How have others addressed similar challenges?
- What partnerships or resources might strengthen our approach?
- What should our next step be?

Thank you for sharing your experience. Your story will help create a practical, peer-to-peer learning experience that reflects the real opportunities and challenges facing local public health leaders across Kentucky.