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**Using Law to Improve the Public's Health:
*Available resources and technical assistance
for state and local health officials***

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Session Overview



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- I. Law as a Tool to Improve Public Health (Larkin)**
- II. Legal Technical Assistance Networks (Blanke/Ashe)**

III. Respondents

Chris Hoke, Deputy Commissioner
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Dileep Bal, District Health Officer
Kauai, Hawaii

IV. Question and Answers



RWJF – Public Health Team

**Our goal:
*To improve
the quality
and impact of
the public
health system***



Public Health



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- **Operates out front, building partnerships and creating collaborative relationships that reach deep into every corner of the community.**
- **Works with its partners to advocate for policies that help us lead healthier lives.**
- **Doesn't presume that government can do it all on its own.**
- **Includes leaders from government, law, business, community-based organizations, health care, academia and the media.**

Public Health Law



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- **Public health laws are any laws that preserve, protect or promote individual and community health.**
- **Laws, regulations, case law and policies are as essential as surveillance, evaluation and strategic communication to protecting and promoting the public's health.**

Authority to Act



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Federal Authority

- U.S. Constitution
- Statutes
- Regulations
- Policies
- Case law

State and Local Authority

- 10th Amendment, which provides police powers
- State constitutions
- Statutes/ordinances
- Regulations
- Policies
- Case law

Law as a Public Health Tool



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- **Protects and promotes health.**
- **Changes behaviors, environments, and social norms.**
- **Strengthens public health agencies' authority and increases flexibility to meet community needs.**

Change Behaviors, Environments & Social Norms



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- **Seatbelt laws**
- **School immunization entry requirements**
- **Smoke-free laws**
- **Reduced lead exposure**
- **Hybrid zoning to allow farmer's markets**



Strengthen Public Health Authority and Increase Flexibility



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- Authority to monitor food safety through surveillance systems
- Authority and flexibility to share resources between neighboring counties and states – regionalization agreements
- Authority to issue provisional licenses for emergency responders



RWJF's Efforts to Support Public Health Law



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- **Building Learning Collaboratives**
 - Turning Point
- **Developing Surveys and White Papers**
 - ASTHO
 - Public Health Law Association
- **Conducting Legal Analysis and Policy Research**
 - Substance Abuse Policy Research
 - Healthy Eating Research
- **Providing Legal Technical Assistance**
 - Tobacco Control Legal Consortium
 - National Policy & Legal Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity
- **Advocating for Legal and Policy Changes**