2027 Preparedness Summit: Call for Abstracts Guidelines

Preparing for What's Next: Building Bridges for a More Connected Future

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Abstracts for the 2027 Preparedness Summit

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) invites you to submit an abstract for the **2027 Preparedness Summit** to be held April 19-21 in Atlanta, GA**.** Proposals for presentations at the 2027 Preparedness Summit should be made using the formal online abstract process. The Preparedness Summit Planning Committee will evaluate abstracts based on several criteria, including timeliness, relevance, design, clarity, outcomes, and potential impact. All abstracts must be submitted via the online abstract system no later than **Sunday November 1, 2026 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time.** Proposals that are incomplete, late, or submitted in an inappropriate format will not be considered.

About the 2027 Conference Theme

Preparedness has evolved from a single program focus into a shared responsibility across public health, healthcare, emergency management, EMS, laboratories, academia, community organizations, private industry, critical infrastructure, and other partners. The conference theme, *Preparing for What's Next: Building Bridges for a More Connected Future*, emphasizes stronger connections, coordination, data sharing, risk communication, community engagement, and cross-sector collaboration to build a more unified and resilient preparedness ecosystem.

Who Should Submit an Abstract

- State, local, tribal, territorial, and federal public health agencies
- Healthcare coalitions and systems; emergency management; EMS; public health laboratories; Medical Reserve Corps units
- Academic, research, community-based, faith-based, private-sector, or critical infrastructure partners
- National, regional, and local preparedness partners

Submission Priorities

- Cross-sector coordination and operational collaboration
- Community engagement, access, and resilience
- Recovery and long-term community health
- Risk communication and public trust
- Data modernization, applied epidemiology, and information sharing
- Emerging technology and innovation
- Planning, exercises, and continuous improvement
- Workforce development and leadership
- Responder safety, mental health, and wellbeing
- Policy, funding, and sustaining foundational capabilities

What We Are Looking for in an Abstract

- Clear description of the issue, approach, partners, outcomes, and lessons learned
- Actionable insights, transferable models, promising practices, tools, evaluation findings, real-world cases
- Timely and relevant content grounded in practice, evidence, evaluation, or response/recovery experience

How to Submit

Submit abstracts through the official Preparedness Summit portal when it opens in mid-September. Deadlines, session types, and review criteria will be posted there and shared in related communications. Questions? Email Abstracts@naccho.org or refer to the Preparedness Summit website for current information.

Abstract Tracks

Track	Focus	Examples of Relevant Topics
1. Cross-Sector Coordination & Operational Collaboration	How organizations make and execute decisions together before and during incidents.	Incident command, EOC activation, unified coordination, healthcare coalitions, mutual aid, shared situational awareness, tribal/county/state/federal coordination.
2. Community Engagement, Access & Resilience	How preparedness partners build trust, share power, and work with communities before, during, and after incidents.	CBO/faith/grassroots partnerships, trusted messengers, access and functional needs, whole-community planning, sustained community relationships.
3. Recovery & Long-Term Community Health	The sustained phase of restoring community health and function after acute response.	Recovery planning, behavioral health recovery, measuring recovery progress, service reconstitution, recovery coalitions, long-term funding.
4. Risk Communication & Public Trust	Communication that informs, guides behavior, and sustains trust during uncertainty.	CERC, misinformation response, plain-language and multilingual messaging, spokesperson strategy, coordinated public messaging.
5. Data Modernization, Applied Epidemiology & Information Sharing	Systems, standards, and agreements that move data to the right people at the right time.	Interoperability, data sharing agreements, surveillance, situational awareness, lab/health-system data integration, data quality.
6. Emerging Technology & Innovation	New or experimental tools changing preparedness and response practice.	AI/ML, forecasting, automation, decision support, novel sensing, geospatial tools, private sector/academic pilots.
7. Planning, Exercises & Continuous Improvement	How organizations plan, test plans, and turn lessons into improvement.	Scenario planning, complex threats, exercise design/evaluation, after-action and corrective-action processes, COOP, readiness measurement.
8. Workforce Development & Leadership	Recruiting, developing, retaining, and leading the preparedness workforce.	Pipelines, surge staffing, MRC/volunteers, leadership development, succession planning, competencies, credentialing.
9. Safety and Security, Mental Health & Wellbeing	Protecting responders' physical safety, behavioral health, and wellbeing.	Responder safety, stress/trauma/burnout prevention, peer support, psychological first aid, workload and staffing practices.
10. Policy, Funding & Sustaining Foundational Capabilities	Policy, governance, and financial environment supporting readiness.	Funding models, governance, accreditation/quality improvement, Project Public Health Ready, foundational capabilities, preparedness value.

Secondary Tags PHEP Capabilities:

- Community Preparedness
- Community Recovery
- Emergency Operations Coordination
- Emergency Public Information and Warning
- Fatality Management
- Information Sharing
- Mass Care
- Medical Countermeasure Dispensing and Administration
- Medical Materiel Management and Distribution
- Medical Surge
- Nonpharmaceutical Interventions
- Public Health Laboratory Testing
- Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation
- Responder Safety and Health, Volunteer Management

Topical Tags:

- Administrative & Legal Preparedness
- Access & Functional Needs
- Climate & Extreme Weather
- Behavioral & Mental Health
- Rural & Frontier Preparedness
- Tribal & Territorial Preparedness
- Healthcare System & Coalition Preparedness
- Supply Chain & Logistics
- Cybersecurity & Critical Infrastructure
- One Health & Zoonotic Threats
- Global Health Security & Cross-Border Preparedness

Hazard/Threat Type:

- Infectious disease
- emerging pathogens
- extreme weather
- climate events
- chemical, radiological, or nuclear
- intentional threats
- bioterrorism
- cyber/infrastructure disruption
- all-hazards

Setting/Jurisdiction: Local; state; tribal; territorial; federal or regional; rural or urban

Important Dates:

9/22/2026: Open call abstracts (first call)

11/1/2026: Deadline for abstract submission

January 2027: Invitations sent to accepted presenters

January 2027: Deadline for presenters' invitation response

January 2027: Open second call for abstracts (select organizations and partners only)

4/2/2027: Deadline for presentation upload

Call for Abstracts: A Phased Approach

The 2027 Call for Abstracts opens in two phases — an initial call for eligible submitter types, followed by a later call that expands to additional session and partner opportunities.

FIRST CALL
Eligible Submitter Types

- Public Health Agencies
- Federal Government
- Healthcare and Medical Preparedness Organizations
- Emergency Management, EMS, and Public Safety
- Academic and Research Institutions
- Community-Based and Nonprofit Organizations
- Preparedness Associations, Coalitions, and Networks
- Students and Trainees

SECOND CALL
Expanded Opportunities

- Pre-Conference Session Proposals
- Sponsored Session Proposals
- Ancillary Event Requests
- Exhibitor or Sponsor Educational Opportunities
- Partner-Led Special Session Proposals
- Other Summit Partnership Opportunities

Eligibility

The first call for applications is open to eligible public health and government agencies, healthcare and medical preparedness organizations, emergency management, EMS and public safety agencies, academic and research institutions, community-based and nonprofit organizations, preparedness associations and networks, and students and trainees.

For-profit organizations must use the separate For-Profit Organization Presentation Application. Submissions made by or on behalf of a for-profit organization will not be accepted through the general Call for Abstracts. This application will be available in January 2027.

General Information: Abstract Submission

Abstracts must represent the work of the presenters listed and appropriately referenced.

All information should be reviewed prior to submission to ensure completeness. Abstract revisions are permitted at any time before the abstract submission deadline.

Abstracts may not be modified after the submission deadline. Presenters may make minor changes after an abstract is accepted until the invitation response deadline. NACCHO reserves the right to edit session information after abstract acceptance to ensure information meets our standards and guidelines.

Before submitting an abstract, please make sure you and an alternative presenter are committed to attending the conference and giving the presentation if the abstract is accepted. All presenters are required to register for the conference and pay related fees. NACCHO does not provide travel allowances, honorariums, or reimbursements for attending the conference.

There are NO restrictions on the number of abstracts you may submit or on the number of submissions you may be selected to present.

Submitted abstracts who **DO NOT** follow guidelines will be ineligible for review.

Choosing a Presentation Format

While the Planning Committee will attempt to honor a submitter's first choice in session format, this will not always be possible. When selecting a session type, there is an option to select consideration for an alternative format.

Learning Session (60- to 90-minute options)

Findings are presented on a specific topic with the opportunity for Q&A. Presentations are 60 to 90 minutes with a maximum of 3 speakers and 1 moderator.

Quick Hit Session (30- to 45-minute options)

These concise, high-impact sessions provide attendees with emerging insights or overviews on key topics in preparedness. Presentations are 30-45 minutes with a maximum of 2 speakers and 1 moderator.

Poster Session

Poster sessions are a visual illustration on a poster board that presents summaries by way of limited text, graphics, and/or photographs. The presentation is for 90 minutes with a maximum of 2 speakers. See also, Poster Presentation additional information below.

Student Poster Session

This format allows students to present original research or projects relevant to public health preparedness. Presentation options include in person or virtual posters. These are encouraged for undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral-level students.

Poster Information

Posters will be on display one day of the conference. If you are selected as a poster session you will be given your poster number and a presentation date and time. You will receive **an email a week before the conference with your poster number/location** assignment and set-up/take-down times. **NACCHO does not print the poster on your behalf.**

Poster dimensions should be 4 ft by 6 ft (horizontal). The poster board is this size; you may choose to fill as much or as little space as you'd like. Posters can be printed on poster paper, fabric, or vinyl. NACCHO will provide you with push pins to adhere your poster to the poster wall.

Demonstration

This hands-on session is designed to showcase tools, technologies, and resources that attendees can use in their own communities. Presentations are a maximum of 90 minutes, include a demonstration, and have a maximum of 3 speakers and 1 moderator.

Workshop/Training

Workshops offer deep-dive skill-building through active participation. Formats may include interactive group work, live demonstrations, simulations, games, exercises and hands-on training activities. Workshops are a 3-hour session with a maximum of 3 speakers and 1 moderator.

For-Profit Learning Session (Second Call for Abstracts)

For-profit organizations are invited to lead informative sessions that align with the Summit's focus. These sessions offer an opportunity to present solutions, innovations, or services relevant to the preparedness community. A NACCHO representative will contact submitters following the close of the submission period to discuss sponsorship opportunities and coordination. Presentations are 60 or 90 minutes with a maximum of 3 speakers and 1 moderator. For-profit sessions will be noted as such in conference materials.

Town Hall (Second Call for Abstracts)

Town Halls are invited sessions coordinated by NACCHO with federal agencies and national preparedness partners. These sessions focus on timely preparedness priorities, federal or partner updates, emerging issues, and opportunities for field feedback and discussion. Town Halls are generally 90 minutes and may include brief presentations, moderated discussion, and audience Q&A.

Presentation Formats at a Glance

PRESENTATION FORMAT	DEMONSTRATION	LEARNING SESSION	QUICK HIT	POSTER
Key Attributes	Hands-on session designed to showcase tools, technologies, and resources	Findings presented on a specific topic within a breakout session with the opportunity for Q&A.	Concise, high-impact session presenting emerging insights or overviews on key topics	Visual display of graphics, diagrams and limited text. Oral presentation focused on discussion and Q&A
Abstract Requirements	Background, methods, results, conclusion			
Session Length	180 minutes	60 and 90 minutes	30-45 minutes	90 minutes
Q&A	During discussion	10- 15 minutes at end of session	5 minutes at the end of session	During discussion
# of Presentations in session	1 presentation	1 presentation	1 presentation	1 presentation
Audio/Visual Provided	Screen, projector, sounds, one lectern, one laptop connection	Screen, projector, sounds, one lectern, one laptop connection	Screen, projector, sounds, one lectern, one laptop connection	None
Room Type	Round	Theater or Round* *Limited rounds available	Theater or Round* *Limited rounds available	NA
# of presenters allowed	1 Moderator, up to 3 presenters	Moderator, up to 3 presenter	1 Moderator, up to 2 presenters	1 to 2 presenters
Alternative presentation types considered	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Abstract Title and Description

Submit each individual abstract to appropriate track. Review the list of tracks carefully to determine which one might be appropriate for your subject area.

Duplicated abstracts will NOT be considered.

Submission with incomplete descriptions will not be selected.

Abstract Title

The title is not included in your abstract word count: however, titles should NOT exceed 15 words.

Title case should be used where the first word and all other major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverb(s); some conjunctions are capitalized.

- Articles such as a, an, and, but, for, or and nor should be in lowercase
- Lowercase the part of a proper name that would be lowercased in text

DO NOT begin abstract titles with "The."

DO NOT end title with a period.

Use a concise title that summarizes the content of the abstract.

DO NOT use abbreviations, unless they are widely accepted by the field (for example, HIV/AIDS is acceptable in place of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Deficiency Syndrome).

Abstract Session Description

Abstracts descriptions for review are **limited to 500 words**, not including the title.

The use of "all caps" should be limited to acronyms generally accepted in the field and names of organizations. The full organization name should be used on first reference.

Session descriptions for publication are limited to **150 words**. This description will be used for the conference program. As such, the first sentence should be a hook that grabs the reader's attention and entices them to come to the session. The description should only briefly reiterate the problem/issues being addressed and the solution. Also, make sure to use good grammar, proper sentence structure, transitions between sentences, and so on. Do not use incomplete sentences. Please do not use bullet points.

Writing Tips

- State the problem.
- Present the key findings and explicit how they address the problem.
- State the overall significance of the work being presented.
- Provide background as needed.
- Make your writing as clear and accessible as possible.
- Also make every effort to use good grammar, proper sentence structure, transition sentences.
- **Please do not use bullet points.**

Online Abstract System

Please follow all directions provided in the online abstract system to ensure your abstract is entered correctly. The system will ask for details of person who is submitting the abstract. This person will not be on the website/app as part of the session listing. The submitter will be asked to identify the presenter(s) and moderators of your session. All presenters MUST be in attendance to be listed on the session on the interactive schedule. The maximum number of speakers is based on the type of session. Additionally, each session MUST provide their own moderator. *Please note: Student submissions will ONLY be considered for poster sessions.*

Submitters

A presenting speaker is defined as an individual person who will present during a conference session. Only the presenters (s) will be listed in the conference platform and mobile app.

The submitter is the person that completes the online abstract submission process. This person is usually involved with the abstract as a presenter or co-presenter.

The abstract submitter will receive formal communication regarding the Planning Committee determination. Formal letters of invitation are sent to submitters by email from **NACCHO by January 2027.** Abstract submitters will receive formal communication regarding the Planning Committee determination. Only the submitter should accept or decline an invitation.

If your abstract submission is approved, you will then be able to add additional presenters.

All in-person presenters can be added to the approved abstract. If people who are not presenting in person contributed to the study design, statistical analysis, or interpretation, they may be listed as a non-presenting in your session materials but should not be included in the online abstract system.

It is the responsibility of the submitter to communicate with any co-presenters prior to the presentation. For the sessions, the lead presenter is responsible for coordinating the presentation with the moderator.

View and Edit Submission:

After completion of your submission, you will receive an email. The email will include session ID, link, and confirmation of receipt. To view or edit your abstract submission, either use the direct link provided in your initial email or login using your confirmation email and password. You may view and edit an abstract any time before the abstract **deadline on November 1, 2026.**

Review and submit:

After you have completed all steps in the process and are ready to submit an abstract for consideration, please carefully proofread your abstract on the final step and confirm. If you exit the system without completing all steps, your abstract will be considered incomplete. You must receive a confirmation email for your abstract to be considered complete.

Invitation Response

Formal letters of invitation will be sent by email from NACCHO in January 2027. This email will come from the online abstract system. All submitters will receive a formal communication that informs them of the Planning Committee decision. All presenters are expected to register for the conference and pay related fees. The deadline for responding to the invitation to present will be in your official acceptance letter. Submitters that fail to respond by the deadline will have their presentation pulled from our programming. Failure to present an accepted abstract could result in disqualification from presenting abstracts at future conferences. Submitters should respond to the invitation via the online speaker portal.

Withdrawals

Withdrawals of a presentation after invitation acceptance should be communicated via email to Abstracts@naccho.org. Withdrawals made after due date or failure to present accepted abstracts could result in disqualification from presenting at future conferences.

Student Abstracts

Students are encouraged to submit abstracts for poster sessions at NACCHO conferences. To be eligible for consideration, abstracts must be submitted by students currently enrolled full time in an undergraduate or graduate/professional program who are actively pursuing a degree in public health or related field. Discounted registration fees are offered to qualified students.

Presenter Disclosure

Presenters must disclose to participants prior to speaking any significant financial interest or other relationships with manufactures of any commercial product(s) or provider(s) of any commercial services discussed in a session presentation and with any commercial supports of activity. This pertains to relationships with pharmaceutical companies, biomedical device manufacturers, or other corporations whose products or services are related to subject matter of the presentation topics. Having an interest or affiliation with a corporate organization does not prevent a speaker from making a presentation but the relation must be made known in advance to the audience.

General Information

We look forward to receiving your abstract submission and learning more about the innovative work being done across the preparedness community. Your contributions are vital to advancing our shared mission of building stronger, more resilient systems and communities. Please ensure you review all requirements carefully, including sessions format guidelines, speaker limits, moderator responsibilities, and participation expectations. Incomplete submissions or those without a designated moderator will not be considered. Thank you for your commitment to public health.

Questions

For more information or assistance with your submission, please contact us at Abstracts@naccho.org.

