

REBECCA HUGHES OFRANE, DrPH
Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health
College for Community Health
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EDUCATION

DEGREE	INSTITUTION	DATE	MAJOR
DrPH	Rutgers University School of Public Health	May 2024	Leadership, Practice and Research
MPH	Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health	May 2010	Enviro. Health Science & Tox.
BS	Rutgers University School of Engineering	May 2004	Biochemical Engineering

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 9/24–present Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ
Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health
Tenure-track professor teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in social and behavioral sciences, health policy, & health systems and administration. Responsible for mentoring students, serving on university and community-based committees, and maintaining a research portfolio focused on equitable health care access, maternal and reproductive health improvement, data-driven health policy, and public health pedagogy. Project Director for the Montclair State Univ. Maternal and Child Health Workforce Catalyst Program.
- 6/23–present SafetyNest, LLC
Independent Consultant & Advisor
Provide consulting services for the award-winning SafetyNest website, including: develop and delivered a live and on-demand environmental health training for doulas and parents; researched and designed the BetterNest quiz, which helps pregnant and new parents assess their potential exposures to toxins based on their environments and behaviors, focused on actionable choices and motivational interviewing theory.
- 09/17–present Self-employed
Full Spectrum Doula, Hudson and Essex Counties, NJ
Provide personalized, evidence-based prenatal education, physical and emotional support during labor and birth or pregnancy loss/termination, and postpartum education and nourishment. Focused on single parents, and LGBTQ and immigrant families.
- 7/23–8/24 New Jersey Department of Health, Trenton, NJ
Executive Director, Maternal and Child Health Services Unit
Directed all Maternal and Child Health Services for the state health department, including over 20 programs and services through the Title V MCH Block Grant, and other federal and state funding sources. Managed a unit of 25+ staff, with annual budget totaling over \$100M.
- 5/19–6/23 NYU Langone School of Medicine, New York, NY
Co-Director of Programs and Administration, Department of Population Health
Led programmatic and administrative teams for the Dashboard programs, including City Health Dashboard and Congressional District Health Dashboard national data and mapping projects. Managed \$5M annual budget, partnerships, hiring, site development and improvement, and communications to increase understanding of data-driven health policy at the local level.

- 8/17–5/19 Social Science Research Council, Brooklyn, NY
Senior Program Manager, Measure of America Program
 Led development and launch of data2go.health, a health data and mapping tool for NYC. Responsibilities included grant and funder management, convening advisory committee, overall management of data collection; managing contractors and guiding site design and development; and all partnership and launch activities.
- 3/08–8/17 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region II, New York, NY
Children’s Environmental Health and Schools Coordinator, Office of Special Projects
 Advised senior officials on children’s health research and policy. Incorporated life-course perspective into regional programmatic work including Superfund community engagement, air toxics geographic targeting, climate change planning, and environmental impact assessments. Trained over 500 childcare staff in Essex County and tribal communities in Eco-Healthy Child Care practices. Managed over \$250k annually in children’s health and community grantmaking.
- Special Assistant to the Regional Administrator, Office of the Regional Administrator*
 Led research, speechwriting and editing on varied environmental and health topics for the Regional Administrator, and coordinated weekly briefings to keep her prepared for media, public events, hearings and other meetings. Tasked to lead multi-agency pollution reduction workgroup with other federal, state and local partners.
- Human Health Risk Assessor, Superfund and Emergency Management Division*
 Completed risk assessments and oversight of contractors for 15+ Superfund sites throughout the region. Presented on risk determinations and represented the agency at public meetings.
- Air Enforcement Inspector, Division of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance*
 Developed disparities-based targeting process, and inspected air pollution facilities. Led the asbestos in schools program, completing school district inspections and oversight of State training and grants.
- 06/04–03/08 Cordis Corporation, a Johnson & Johnson Company, Miami Lakes, FL and Warren, NJ
New Product Development Engineer, Research and Development
 Coordinated pilot plant production of new stent drug-coating process, managing technical logistics and activities of a team of technicians.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Montclair State University

- HLTH 360 Health Policy and Administration
- HLTH 498 Internship and Culminating Seminar
- HLTH 504 Behavioral and Social Science in Health
- HLTH 515 Maternal and Child Health Foundations (co-developed)

Rutgers University School of Public Health

- EPID 607 Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology
- UGPH 711 Leadership and Management I: Organizations Contributing to Public Health (TA)

Environmental Protection Agency

- Eco-Healthy Child Care Training

SCHOLARSHIP & PUBLICATIONS*Peer-Reviewed*

1. **Ofrane RH**, Rokicki S, Blumenfeld J, Kantor L. Barriers to Birth Center Integration into the Perinatal Health System in NJ: A Qualitative Analysis. *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health*. 2025. doi: [10.1111/jmwh.70010](https://doi.org/10.1111/jmwh.70010)
2. **Ofrane RH**, Kantor L, Blumenfeld J, Rokicki S. Comparison of Medicaid Financing for Birth Centers: A Nine-State Policy Analysis. *Frontiers in Health Services*. 2025;5:1569462. doi: [10.3389/frhs.2025.1569462](https://doi.org/10.3389/frhs.2025.1569462)
3. **Ofrane RH**, Rokicki S, Kantor L, Blumenfeld J. Financial Barriers to Expanded Birth Center Access in NJ: A Qualitative Thematic Analysis. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*. 2025; 70(3). doi: [10.1111/jmwh.13732](https://doi.org/10.1111/jmwh.13732)
4. Spoer BR, Conderino SE, Lampe TM, **Ofrane RH**, De Leon E, Thorpe LT, Chang VW, Elbel B. Association between racial residential segregation and walkability in 745 U.S. cities. *Health & Place*. 2023; 84:103114. doi: [10.1016/j.healthplace.2023.103114](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2023.103114)
5. **Ofrane RH**, Breslin S, Levine S, Gourevitch MN, Levy M. Health and Equity Data to Teach the Next Generation of Public Health Leaders. *Public Health Reports*. Published online January 12, 2023:00333549221143090. doi: [10.1177/00333549221143090](https://doi.org/10.1177/00333549221143090)
6. Spoer BR, McCulley E, Lampe TM, Hsieh PY, Chen A, **Ofrane RH**, Rollins H, Thorpe LE, Bilal U, Gourevitch MN. Validation of a neighborhood-level COVID Local Risk Index in 47 large U.S. cities. *Health & Place*. 2022;76:102814. doi: [10.1016/j.healthplace.2022.102814](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2022.102814)
7. Thorpe LE, Chunara R, Roberts T, Pantaleo N, Irvine C, Conderino S, Li Y, Hsieh PY, Gourevitch MN, Levine S, **Ofrane RH**, Spoer B. Building Public Health Surveillance 3.0: Emerging Timely Measures of Physical, Economic, and Social Environmental Conditions Affecting Health. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2022;112(10):1436-1445. doi: [10.2105/AJPH.2022.306917](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2022.306917)

Reports & Briefs

1. **Ofrane RH**. “The Current Medicaid Reimbursement Model is Hurting Access to Maternal Care. Here’s How We Fix It.” Scholars Strategy Network. Dec. 2025. [Link](#)
2. **Ofrane RH**, Li Y. “Data Insights: Improving Health through Credit Access.” City Health Dashboard. Apr. 2022. [Link](#)
3. **Ofrane RH**, Li Y. “Data Insights: Broadband Internet – A public good, but not yet for all.” City Health Dashboard. Sep. 2021. [Link](#)
4. *Contributor*, Battisto J, Casellas-Barnes M, Landau R, Lyndon A, Niles M. “Maternal Health, The Fourth Trimester and Beyond: The Case for Transformative Investments and Solutions in Maternal and Child Health.” White paper. Federal Reserve Bank of NY and NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing. Dec. 2021. [Link](#)
5. Kleiman N, Feldman J, **Ofrane RH**, Spoer B, Thorpe L, Gourevitch M. “City Types for Improving Health and Equity: Understanding America’s Small and Midsize Cities.” NYU Langone Health, Department of Population Health, Aug. 2020. [Link](#)

Media & Op-Eds

1. **Ofrane RH**. Opinion: Let’s Reimagine Maternal Health Policy in NJ. NJ Spotlight News, Jun. 12, 2025; [Link](#)
2. Taylor M. “Are Doulas Covered by Insurance?” www.Whattoexpect.com, Mar. 5, 2025; [Link](#)
3. Basile LM. “Scared about how women’s health could further deteriorate under Trump? You’re not alone.” www.mdlinx.com, Mar. 5, 2025; [Link](#)
4. Wolfe D. “Doula vs. Midwife: What’s the Difference—and Can You Have Both?” www.thebump.com, Jan. 2, 2025; [Link](#)
5. **Ofrane RH** and Harrison Gulla L. “Why NJ must lead on reproductive health access – Opinion.” NJ.com, Dec. 2, 2024; [Link](#)

6. **Ofrane RH.** “How Covid-Related Shutdowns and Education Level Affected Unemployment Across America’s Cities.” American Communities Project, Sept. 2021; [Link](#)
7. Spoer B, **Ofrane RH.** “Making Data Accessible for Small Communities.” Grantmakers in Health, Apr. 2021; [Link](#)
8. **Ofrane RH.** “Amid Uncertainty, Using Community and City Types to Improve Health and Equity.” American Communities Project, Oct. 2020; [Link](#)
9. Lewis K, Burd-Sharps S, **Ofrane RH.** “Youth Disconnection Rates Highlight Structural Barriers to Achievement in the US.” Items: Insights from the Social Sciences, Apr. 2018; [Link](#)

Scholarship in Progress

1. **Ofrane RH,** Lalanne-Raymond G, Agolli S*, Cooley S, Bilyj S, Silvera S, Scotto-Rosato, N. Maternal Postpartum Behaviors Based on Exposure to Childbirth Education and Home Visiting in New Jersey, PRAMS 2018–2022. *Maternal and Child Health Journal.* Submitted Sept 2025.
2. **Ofrane RH,** Canada T*, Birnbaum A. The Health Communications Assessment Checklist: A Teaching Tool for Identifying Bias in the Age of AI. *Pedagogy in Health Promotion.* Submitted Oct 2025.
3. Casimir G, Lalanne-Raymond G, Cooley S, **Ofrane RH,** Amar P, Blanco F. Physical Abuse as a Risk Factor for Adverse Mental and Behavioral Maternal Outcomes. *Maternal and Child Health Journal.* Submitted January 2026.
4. **Ofrane RH,** Canada T*, Liu SY, Birnbaum A. Critical AI Literacy and Student Identity: A Mixed Methods Study. *Pedagogy in Health Promotion.* In preparation.
5. Rivera A*, Perez J*, **Ofrane RH.** Latiné Graduate Student Perspectives on Institutional Servingness. *Journal of Latinos and Education.* In preparation.
6. Romano A, Jennings C, **Ofrane RH,** Welch L. Innovative Public Funding for an Integrated Maternity Care Ecosystem: A Landscape Assessment. *Health Services Research.* In preparation.

* indicates student collaborators

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

1. **Ofrane RH.** *Bringing Birth Centers to the Mainstream.* Invited speaker, NJ ACNM, NJ Midwifery Day, 4/26.
2. **Ofrane RH.** *Improving Rural Health Maternity Care with Birth Centers.* Invited speaker, National Academy for State Health Policy, 3/26.
3. **Ofrane RH.** *Reducing Environmental Exposures in Pregnancy and Beyond.* Invited speaker, Northern Regional Lead and Healthy Homes Coalition, 11/25.
4. **Ofrane RH.** *Policy and Practice Recommendations for Birth Center Sustainability and Health System Integration.* Presented at American Association of Birth Centers Conference, 9/25.
5. **Ofrane RH.** *Policy and Practice Recommendations to Improve Birth Center Access for Low-Income and Low-Risk Birthing People.* Poster presented at Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs Conference, 04/25.
6. **Ofrane RH,** Keppler E, Mondestin-Sorrentino M. *Our Health, Our Bodies, Our Rights: A Call for Empowerment.* Invited speaker, NJ Women Lawyers Association, 03/25.
7. Evans S, **Ofrane RH,** Galvez M. *Healthy Homes, Healthy Families: What Clinicians Need to Know.* Invited speaker, New York County Medical Society, 02/25.
8. **Ofrane RH,** Birnbaum A. *Teaching Students to Use and Assess AI for Health Communication.* Presented at Montclair 2024 Faculty Showcase: Generative AI at Montclair, 12/24.
9. **Ofrane RH.** *Barriers to Birth Center Access in NJ: A Qualitative Thematic Analysis.* Poster presented at American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 10/24.
10. **Ofrane, RH.** *Reproductive Health and Choice: Connecting the Dots.* Invited Speaker, NJ Public Health Association Conference, 10/24.
11. **Ofrane RH,** Reed D. *State Perspectives on NJ’s Community Doula Expansion Program.* Poster presented at Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs Conference, 04/24.

12. Nantwi A, Lalanne-Raymond G, **Ofrane RH**, Scotto-Rosato, N. *An Analysis of Perinatal Periods of Risk on Excess Fetal-Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity in New Jersey, 2018-2021*. Presented at Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs Conference, 04/24.
13. **Ofrane RH**, Levy M, Breslin S, Levine S, Gourevitch, MN (2021). *Meeting public health competencies with the City Health Dashboard*. Presented at American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 10/21.
14. **Ofrane RH**, Levy M, Gourevitch MN (2021), *Today's Student, Tomorrow's Leader: Using City Health Dashboard Data to Teach Health Equity*. Poster presented at Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health Annual Conference, 03/21.
15. **Ofrane RH**, Kidd J, Breslin S (2020), *Using the City Health Dashboard for local health department accreditation*. Presented at American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 10/20.
16. **Ofrane RH**, Velarde H, Breslin S (2020), *Reaching Vulnerable Communities: Cities using the City Health Dashboard to improve health equity*. Presented at American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 10/20.
17. Breslin S, **Ofrane RH**, Spoer B, Levine S (2019), *City Health Dashboard in Practice: Local Health Departments and Public Health Practitioners Share Applications of Dashboard Data*. Presented at American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, 11/19.

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

Awards & Recognition

Honoree: NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research's Matilda White Riley Early Stage Investigator Paper Award, 2025
 MSU Student "Thank a Professor" Certificate, May 2025
 APHA Maternal and Child Health Effective Practice Award, 2024
 Delta Omega Public Health Honorary Society – Alpha Eta Chapter at Rutgers University, 2024

Fellowships

Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning Fellow, Montclair State University, 2025-2026
 NJ Maternal and Child Health Policy Innovation Program, The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP), 2023–2024

Grants

Title: Maternal and Child Health Public Health Catalyst Program - ***Awarded***
 Dates: 06/25–05/30
 Funder: U.S. DHHS, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
 Role: Program Director
 Total Budget: \$675,000

Title: Birth Center Barriers: A Snapshot of State Medicaid Reimbursement - ***Awarded***
 Dates: 4/26–11/26
 Funder: American Association of Birth Centers Foundation
 Role: Principal Investigator
 Total Budget: \$17,744

Title: Young, Pregnant, and Nowhere to Go: Exploring Pre-term Birth by Geographic Access to Quality Prenatal Care - ***Submitted***
 Dates: 10/26–9/30
 Funder: Burroughs Wellcome Fund
 Role: Co-Investigator
 Total Budget: \$499,960

Title: Postpartum Doula and Maternal Nutrition - ***Submitted***

Dates: 01/26–12/27

Funder: Allen Foundation

Role: Principal Investigator

Total Budget: \$110,834

Title: The Birth Equity Ecosystem in NJ: A Mixed Methods Analysis of Birth Center Access - ***Completed***

Dates: 06/22–05/25

Funder: American Association of Birth Centers Foundation

Role: Principal Investigator

Total Budget: \$11,250

Title: City Health Dashboard: Continuing to Build Impact and Deepen Engagement - ***Completed***

Dates: 06/23–05/25

Funder: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Role: Program Co-Director (until 07/23)

Total Budget: \$8 million

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

Montclair State University

College for Community Health Convocation Committee, 2025–26

Committee on Campus Safety, Employee Safety Sub-Committee, 2025–present

Fostering Unity Committee for the College for Community Health, 2024–present

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Department of Public Health, 2024–present

External

Committee Member, *NJ FamilyCare Medical Assistance Advisory Council*, 2025-2027

Committee Member, *American Association of Birth Centers Research Committee*, 2025-present

Committee Member, *NJ PRAMS Steering Committee*, 2024–present

Committee Member, *AMCHP MCH Innovations Committee*, 2024–2025

Abstract Reviewer, *APHA Conference, Maternal and Child Health Section*, 2022, 2024, 2025

Proposal Reviewer, *Pivotal Ventures, Action for Women's Health Global Open Call*, 2025

Proposal Reviewer, *Lever for Change and ICONIQ Impact's Maternal and Infant Health Award*, 2022

Proposal Reviewer, *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Racial Equity 2030 Grant Competition*, 2021

Mentor, *APHA MCH Section*, 2024-2025

Mentoring and Leadership Committee, EPA Region II, New York, NY, 2012–2014

Board Secretary, *Wombs of the World Foundation*, 2024–present

Board Member, *York Street Project*, Jersey City, NJ, 2018–2020

Patient Safety Escort, *Reproductive Health Clinic*, Englewood, NJ, 2017–2018

CERTIFICATES & TRAINING

ACUE Effective Teaching Practices, ACUE (expected Dec 2026)

Maternal Mental Health Certificate, PSI + Policy Center (expected May 2026)

Empowering Online Teaching and Learning 101, Montclair State University (2026)

Building Expertise in Administration & Management (BEAM) Training for Public Health Professionals, University of Miami and deBeaumont Foundation (2022)

Certified Full-Spectrum Doula (Birth, Post-Partum, Termination, Loss and Reproductive Health), Doula Trainings International (2020)

Human Research Certification: Social/Behavioral/Epidemiologic Research (through 07/2026); Export Compliance (through 02/2030), CITI

Population Health Informatics Certificate, City University of New York Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (2019)

MEMBERSHIPS IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institution Educators
American Public Health Association – MCH Section
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health
National Association for Doctors of Public Health
New Jersey Public Health Association
Scholars Strategy Network