



2025 MPELRA SUMMER CONFERENCE

AUGUST 6-8, 2025

IN-PERSON: The Inn on Lake Superior, Duluth, MN

VIRTUAL: VIA TEAMS

NOTE: Starting this year, MPELRA will no longer provide printed copies of conference materials in an effort to be more eco-friendly. Attendees who prefer printed materials are encouraged to print them beforehand, digital versions will be sent to registered attendees the week of July 28th, 2025.

The virtual link will be sent in advance, as well as technology tips for the best virtual experience.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

11:00 am **Registration Desk Opens**

Lunch will be provided outside the Northern Lights Ballroom beginning at 11:00 am.

12:00 pm **Welcome**

Jenn Worthington, MPELRA President, DHS, Interim Deputy HR Director, State of Minnesota Department of Human Services

12:10 – 2:30 pm **Back to Basics Session – Vet's Preference and How it Plays Into Hiring and Termination** Veterans hold a special place in our hearts, and in the Minnesota workplace. If you work in public employment, you'll undoubtedly be working with veterans on a regular basis. Our experienced group will guide you through both the legal and practical basics of hiring and the possible firing of veterans as a Minnesota public employer. *Jason Schmidt, City of St. Paul, Greg Wiley, and Megan Spriggs, Wiley Reber Law, PC*

2:30 – 2:45 pm **Break**

2:45 – 4:15 pm **Just Cause - Not Just 'Cause I Want To!** In this 90-minute session, we'll revisit the foundational principles of just cause, explore real-world scenarios through interactive case studies, and gain practical tools for navigating challenges when terminations are overturned. Whether you're negotiating discipline language, advising supervisors, or managing arbitration outcomes, this

session will sharpen your ability to apply just cause standards with clarity, consistency, and confidence. *Holland Atkinson, Chief Labor Relations Officer, Hennepin County*

4:15 pm – **Check-in to Hotel(s)**

6:00 – 10:00 pm – **Great Lakes Aquarium**

The aquarium will be closed to the public and open for our private event. We will have full access to the space with 3 interactive touch pools and dive program for our attendees. Bar service will begin at 6 pm, and dinner will be at 6:30 pm.

The aquarium is a 1 mile walk each way. For those who would rather drive over, free parking is available at the aquarium.

THURSDAY AUGUST 7

7:30 – 8:20 am **Breakfast outside the Northern Lights Ballroom**

8:20 – 8:30 am **Welcome from the**

National PELRA President *Roxanne J. Bonner, Human Resources Manager, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, NPELRA President*

8:30 – 12:30 pm **Effective Negotiation & Settlement – It's What We Do!** Don't miss this opportunity to learn from one of the nation's leading experts in the art of negotiation. Professor Craver has presented negotiation seminars in over 40 states and half a dozen countries and has authored numerous books on the art of negotiation. He is a dynamic and entertaining speaker whose detailed course on negotiation will help you to maximize your own negotiation skills regardless of your personal style. Whether you are a grizzled veteran or just starting out, this session is guaranteed to make you a better negotiator. *Charles B. Craver, Professor, George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C. (break included)*



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12:30 – 1:30 pm **Lunch outside the Northern Lights Ballroom**

1:30 – 4:30 pm – **Reasonable Suspicion Training and Positive Random Test Results** Reasonable suspicion training equips HR professionals with essential tools to identify and address potential substance abuse issues in the workplace, fostering a safer and healthier environment for all. This program emphasizes empathetic communication, proper documentation, and proactive strategies to confidently handle challenging situations while supporting both employees and organizational goals. *Bryan Schafer, Responsible Beverage Training Liaison, Minnesota Safety Council* (break included)

5:00 - 7:30 pm **Outdoor Reception with drinks and hors d'oeuvres - Eagle Harbor (on the rooftop)**

Alternative activity: Up to 20 individuals interested in a 9-hole golf event at Enger Park Golf Course may contact Ben Reber - ben.reber@wileyreberlaw.com - no later than July 11th to register. This off-site event requires individuals to cover their own costs and transportation. Cost for golf and cart is \$44.64 per person, and the first tee time is set for 5:10 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8

8:00 – 9:00 am **Breakfast outside the Northern Lights Ballroom**

9:00 – 10:00 am **Labor and Employment Legislative Update** The 2025 Minnesota legislative session, which began on January 14, was a rollercoaster of political drama and policy debates. Join us for a legislative update by Owen Wirth, League of Minnesota Cities Intergovernmental Representative, featuring a summary of major session highlights from employment and labor laws. *Owen Wirth, Intergovernmental Relations, League of MN Cities*

10:00 – 10:30 am **Break/Checkout**

10:30- 12:30 pm **Increasing Your Ability to Persuade & Influence** Join this captivating presentation to discover how to leverage the ancient skills of ethos, pathos and logos to construct compelling, persuasive conversations. Learn to harness the power of nonverbal communication, exploring posture and body language to increase the odds of successful persuasion. You'll sharpen your ability to read the behaviors of others, gaining insight into when to proceed and when to take a strategic break *Kristin Scroggin, Founder of genWHY Communications* (www.genwhy.com)

12:30 pm **Conference Close**

Thank You For attending!

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT INFO

National PELRA's CLRP our summer conference multiday program is worth 5 Recertification Credits. Our Winter Conference is worth 2 Recertification Credits. [CLRP Recertification Program \(npelra.org\)](http://CLRP Recertification Program (npelra.org))

HR recertification credits - Attendees can earn HR recertification credits for the conference by submitting their information through the PSHRA, SHRM or HRCI portals.

MN State Board of Legal Education – Summer Conference Credits has typically been around 6.0 CLE credits. For more information, contact Ben Reber at ben.reber@wileyreberlaw.com



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Save the dates!

Future MPELRA Conferences

February 5, 2026 - Winter Conference
Crowne Plaza Minneapolis West, Plymouth, MN

August 5-7, 2026 – Summer Conference
Wood Lake Meeting Center, Rochester, MN

February 4, 2027 – Winter Conference
Crowne Plaza Minneapolis West, Plymouth, MN

August 11-13, 2027 – Summer Conference
Breezy Point Resort, Breezy Point, MN

February 3, 2028 – Winter Conference
Crowne Plaza Minneapolis West, Plymouth, MN

August 2-4, 2028 – Summer Conference
Treasure Island Resort, Welch, MN



Future National PELRA Conferences

April 19-22, 2026 - Charlotte, NC

April 11-14, 2027 - Fort Worth, TX

April 9-12, 2028- San Diego, CA



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REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

REGISTRATION: Click [HERE](#) to register via National PELRA.

- ✓ Expert-led sessions and conference handouts
- ✓ Breakfasts, snacks, and lunches
- ✓ Wednesday night aquarium event with after-hours dinner and reception event
 - Register the number of guests you'd like to bring when completing your conference registration. Only \$25 per guest for the event, reception, and drinks
- ✓ Thursday evening reception

If you have any problem with your conference registration, please contact National PELRA team at customerservice@npelra.org (Courtney) or educate@npelra.org (Kelsia); 858-299-3150 x200 or x300.

MEMBER

Virtual conference rate (must be registered by 7/25/25).....\$175
In-person conference Early Bird rate (by 7/11/25)\$275
Standard In-person Rate (on/after 7/12/25).....\$375

NON-MEMBER*

(*Must be eligible for membership per National PELRA by-laws.)
Virtual conference rate (must be registered by 7/25/25).....\$375
Standard In-person Rate.....\$475

If you are a non-member, please consider joining! Membership information and application can be found [here](#).

All registration options will close on 7/25/2025 and no late registrations will be allowed!

Cancellation: A \$50 administrative fee will be charged for all cancellations. **All cancellations received after 8/1/25 are non-refundable.** No-shows are non-refundable. One registration transfer is allowed per registration and transfers must have the same membership status or fees will be adjusted accordingly. All cancellation requests must be emailed in writing to educate@npelra.org

LODGING

Lodging is available at both The Inn on Lake Superior and the Hampton Inn.

The Inn on Lake Superior: Make your lodging arrangements by calling The Inn on Lake Superior at (218) 726-1111 and noting your MPELRA attendance (group code 10710). Reserved lodging is limited and the MPELRA room block will be released on **7/6/25**. The lodging rate is \$264.99 to \$285.99, plus tax. If you want to stay the weekend, work directly with the hotel. Cancellation fees may apply.



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Hampton Inn: Reservations can be made by clicking [here](#) or by calling (218) 720-3000 and letting them know you are with the MPELRA Conference. Lodging is limited, and the MPELRA room block will be released on **7/9/25**. Room rates range from \$289.00 to \$309.00 per night. Cancellation fees may apply.