



51st Annual Training Conference

June 28-July 1, 2026

**Holiday Inn
Saratoga Springs, NY**

NYSPELRA.ORG

Message from the President

On behalf of the New York State Public Employer Relations Association (NYSPELRA), it is my honor and pleasure to invite you to attend the 51st NYSPELRA Annual Training Conference (ATC), which is once again being held in beautiful Saratoga Springs, New York. The ATC starts on Monday, June 29, 2026, and will run through Wednesday, July 1, 2026. Early “in person” registration will take place starting at 8:00am on June 29, 2026, at the Holiday Inn and Welcome Remarks to follow at 9:00 am to officially open the conference.

As always, we will have a variety of timely and topical presentations for public sector labor professionals, and this year, I am very excited to announce that John Mancini has graciously agreed to present the keynote address to kick off the ATC!

I would be remiss in the message if I did not take this opportunity to thank both President-Elect, Elayne Gold, and the entire NYSPELRA Board of Directors, for all their hard work and dedication in putting this program together. It is a great program that professionals at all levels of their career will both learn and benefit from. While this conference is about presentations on best practices and timely topics of discussion for the Human Resource and Labor Relations Professionals, it is also about networking with other practitioners and learning about issues they are facing and their recommended solutions.

The enclosed information about the ATC can also be found on the NYSPELRA website, which can be located at NYSPELRA.org. Please note that we do offer a discounted conference rate for retired NYSPELRA members as well as an Early Bird Registration rate. As we have in the past, we also intend to apply for Continuing Legal Education credits for the attorneys who attend eligible programs offered at the conference. Financial Assistance Policy is attached.

If you have any questions about the ATC or registering for the ATC, please reach out to Jack Kalinkewicz at jikperassoc@yahoo.com or (518)-366-2952. I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference, and please share this letter with other public sector labor relations professionals.

Sincerely,
Lori A. Alesio
NYSPELRA President

Conference FAQs

Click [NYSPELRA.ORG](https://www.nyspelra.org)

<p>Lodging Holiday Inn – Saratoga Springs 232 Broadway Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 Click: Online Reservation</p>	<p>Financial Hardship Application available for those needing support. Click to Download **Financial Aid Policy is available. See attached.</p>
<p>Member Rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$405 • \$330 Early Registration ends June 7th <p>Click to Register</p>	<p>Non-Member Rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$540 • \$480 Early Registration ends June 6th <p>Click to Register</p>
<p>Retiree Rate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 • Must be a NYSPELRA Member <p>Click to Register</p>	<p>Meals See Agenda below for provided conference meals. Dietary restrictions? Note limitations (<i>not preferences</i>) when completing online registration.</p>
<p>Members Questions Connect with National PELRA team member Courtney Churchill.</p>	<p>Online Registration Support Have questions or running into hiccups? Connect with National PELRA.</p>

****This Conference is appropriate for both new as well as experience attorneys**

****Financial Aid Policy is available. [See attached.](#)**

SUNDAY

Pre-Conference: June 28, 2026

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM **Early Registration**

Day 1: June 29, 2026

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM **Registration Opens/Breakfast**

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM **Welcome & Introductions**

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM **Keynote Speaker**

MONDAY

Legislative Review and Update

Keynote Speaker: John Mancini, Esq. Counsel

Who better to provide the ATC's first program but our own world class dynamic speaker, John Mancini – updating us with the actions of the NYS Legislature over this past Legislative Session.

11:00 AM - 11:15 AM **Break**

11:15 AM - 12:30 PM **Employment Law Update and Trends for 2026 and Beyond**

Speaker: Michelle Phillips, Principal Attorney, Jackson Lewis, PC

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM **Lunch**

1:30 PM - 2:45 PM **Discrimination Investigations: A Case Study**

This session will focus the nuts and bolts of an investigation – from receipt of the complaint, through information gathering; witness interviews; analysis, and preparation of the Report of Findings.

Speakers: Elaine Bartley, Esq., Director and Counsel, Anti-discrimination Investigations Division, New York State Office of Employee Relations

2:45 PM - 3:00 PM **Break**

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM **Artificial Intelligence: It's Benefits and Pitfalls in the World of Labor Relations**

This session will focus on the impact Artificial Intelligence has on our work life. The session will utilize an AI generated Fact Pattern with (2) panelists' feedback and guidance.

Speaker: Mairead Jones-Kennelly, Esq. Senior Counsel SUNY OGC and the AI Legal Institute
Hannah Hague, Esq., Assistant Counsel SUNY OGC Contracts and the AI Legal Institute

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM **First Timers Reception**

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM **Dinner on your own in Downtown Saratoga Springs**

Day 2: June 30, 2026

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM **Statutory Solutions vs. Substantive Due Process: Labor Conflicts and Legal Battles in the Lochner Era**

TUESDAY

The presentation will continue previous discussions about various conflicts in the United States labor history, this time focusing on legal challenges to select pieces of pro-labor legislation in the early 20th century.

Speaker: Ben Leonard, Esq., Counsel for Labor and Employment, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM New York State Civil Service: The Civil Service Merit System of the Future

This session will focus on the Department of Civil Service implementation of several initiatives to strengthen New York's public workforce to better meet the needs of today's jobseekers, chief among them, launching the NY HELPS program. In this session, the Department of Civil Service will highlight recent achievements and lay out the future for the civil service merit system in New York State.

Speaker: Timothy R. Hogues, Commissioner New York State Department of Civil Service

Rebecca A. Corso, Executive Deputy Commissioner New York State Department of Civil Service

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM Break

10:45 AM - 12:00 PM Annual PERB Update

This session will provide an annual update to the latest PERB decisions and topics of interest.

Speaker: Tim Connick, Chairperson, NYS Public Employment Relations Board

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM Employee Health and Safety: Legal and Practical Implications

This session focuses on the critical intersection of occupational safety obligations and collective bargaining responsibilities under New York's public employment laws and provides practical strategies for collective bargaining language and negotiation.

Speaker: Carlton Hummel, Commissioner of Personnel, Onondaga County

Karlee Bolanos, Esq., Bolanos Labor Law

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM Break

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM Strikes in NYS – Law, Experience, Future The Taylor Law's No-Strike Rule: What Public Employers Need to Know

This session will explain the Taylor Law's prohibition on strikes by New York public employees, the legal rationale behind the ban, the employer's legal obligations in response to a strike, and the consequences for unions and workers who violate it.

Speaker: Christopher Maugans, Esq., Partner, Goldberg Segalla

3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Cyber Security: What We Need to Know and Practice

Speakers: TBD

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

General Reception

Day 3: July 1, 2026

WEDNESDAY

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Ethics and the Code of Conduct: Rules and proposals to live by

This presentation will provide an overview of the NYS Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government's (COELIG) authority with a focus on its administration of the Financial Disclosure Program and interpretative and enforcement activities involving the NYS Public Officers Law (POL) and COELIG regulations. It will also cover the conflict-of-interest provisions contained in the POL and identify practical scenarios where they arise in state and agencies and authorities. These include outside activities and employment, gift restrictions, negotiating future employment opportunities, nepotism, post-employment considerations and unwarranted privileges.

Speaker: Joseph Gryzlo, Ethics & Compliance Officer from the New York Power Authority

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Arbitration Review Panel

A Panel of seasoned labor attorney's will offer their valued opinions and experiences with various labor arbitrators and engage in an interactive discussion with the audience on their experiences and impressions of labor arbitrators working in New York State.

Speakers: Earl T. Redding, Esq., Partner Roemer Wallens Gold & Mineaux LLP

Emily Middlebrook, Esq., Partner, Hancock Estabrook

Christopher T. Kurtz, Esq., Member, Bond, Schoeneck & King

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Gender- Based Violence and the Workplace Certification

This session will address the amendments to the NYS Finance Law which would require any bidders to a competitive state procurement (whether the bidder is the state, local government or private entity) to have a policy in place addressing gender-based violence.

Speakers: Elena P. Pablo, Esq., Partner, Roemer Wallens Gold & Mineaux LLP

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM

Closing Remarks

Speaker: Lori Alesio



New York State Public Employer Labor Relations Association

NYSPELRA 51th Annual Conference

Financial Hardship Application

Conference attendees may apply for a discount on the registration fee for attending the annual training conference. This should be submitted before completing online registration. The application must be made in writing to the Board of Directors explaining the basis of the hardship. All such applications shall remain confidential with the Board. Discounts are not available when the fees are paid by the attendee's employer.

Criteria for financial hardship applications:

1. Applicants that are unemployed will receive a 75% discount (excludes retirees).
2. Applicants whose annual income is less than \$15,000 will receive a 50% discount.
3. Applicants whose annual income is greater than \$15,000, but less than \$30,000, will receive a 25% discount.
4. An income greater than \$30,000 is not eligible for a discount.

Applications must be submitted in writing to:

NYSPELRA Board of Directors

c/o John J. Kalinkewicz, Secretary/Treasurer

jjkpersassoc@yahoo.com

Deadline for submissions is Friday, June 8, 2026