

New York | James McDonald, MD, MPH

Commissioner of Health

New York State Department of Health

James V. McDonald MD, MPH, was appointed Acting Commissioner of Health January 1, 2023 and confirmed by the Senate June 9, 2023. Prior to joining the New York State Department of Health in July of 2022, Dr. McDonald served at the Rhode Island Department of Health since 2012.

At the Rhode Island Department of Health, he served in multiple roles including, Interim Director of Health, Chief Administrative Officer of the Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline, Medical Director for the COVID unit, as well as the Medical Director for Division of Health care quality and safety and the Drug Overdose prevention program. He was also a member of the Governor's task force on Preventing Overdose deaths. Dr. McDonald has faculty appointments at the UAlbany School of Public Health as well as Brown School of Public Health.



Dr. McDonald earned his MD from Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, his pediatric residency in the U.S. Navy, and his preventive medicine residency from the State University of New York. He earned his MPH from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. He earned his BS in Biology from Siena College.

His diverse career includes officership in the U.S. Navy, as well as private practice in rural areas where health care shortages existed. Dr. McDonald also served in the Indian Health Service in the Navajo Nation, serving as Medical Director of Outpatient Medicine in Chinle, Arizona.

Dr. McDonald was awarded the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Siena College in May of 2024 for exemplary achievement, leadership and commitment to humanitarian ideals.