APHSA Special Statement
2023 ISM + PHSA Education Conference and Expo
June 16, 2023

Bringing people together through conferences and events is a critical connector and accelerator for members, partners, and the many others the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) works alongside to reach our desired future state for human services.

The IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM) and Public Human Services Attorneys (PHSA), affinity groups of APHSA, are holding this year's ISM + PHSA Education Conference and Expo in Kissimmee, Florida. With recent state legislative actions in Florida affecting BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ individuals, and potentially causing both personal and professional concerns and challenges around traveling to this location, we want to assure you we both hear and understand these concerns and challenges.

Selecting a conference venue is a complex decision that involves various factors and is typically made up to 3-5 years in advance. In the case of the upcoming ISM + PHSA Conference, the location was initially selected for the 2020 conference, but due to the pandemic and contractual commitments, it was moved to 2023. Our decision to keep the conference in Florida takes into account the fiscal impact breaking our contract would have on our ability to deliver on our mission and best support our members.

During our time together in Kissimmee, our focus will be on creating an experience that fosters a safe and inclusive environment, and a sense of belonging for everyone. Our approach to the conference—from the sessions we select, to the vendors we use to the opportunities for building community among peers—will reflect this. We are also working closely with the Kissimmee Municipal Department of Tourism which recently released a statement reaffirming its commitment to championing diversity, equity, and inclusion within their hospitality community.

We want to reiterate our commitment to fostering respectful dialogue and creating a safe and inclusive environment for everyone in all that we do. We value your input and encourage open discussions that promote understanding and bridge divides. In the months leading up to the ISM + PHSA Conference, we will create space to hear from members, staff, and partners to understand their perspectives and use creative problem solving to meet everyone's needs as best we can. Please utilize our comment and feedback form to address any concerns you may wish to share with us. Stay safe, be well, and we hope to see you soon.