

## **Samantha Thomas**

Regional Coordinator - PH Emergency Preparedness  
Erie County Dept. of Health



Sam Thomas serves as the Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Erie County Department of Health, where she leads regional planning, response efforts, and the management of over 260 Medical Reserve Corps (ECMRC) volunteers. With over 19 years of experience in public health and military leadership, Sam is also a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer for the U.S. Air Force Reserves, specializing in global medical readiness and En Route Patient Staging.

A dedicated advocate for community resilience, she serves as Sector Lead for ECMRC's Disaster Mental Health Sector and as a Steering Committee member for the Erie County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD). Sam holds a B.S. in Public Health from the University at Buffalo and has an extensive background in trauma care including a deployment at Craig Joint Theater Hospital in Afghanistan. Much of her work focuses on bridging the gap between medical systems and community-based response & recovery. As part of this work, Sam led a team in the development of Erie County's Incident Family Assistance Operations Plan, an incident that underwent critical real-world application during the regional response to the major I-90 motorcoach crash in August 2025.