



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
**Tuesday, November 12, 2024**

## **MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE CONFIRMS DR. MARIELENA VÉLEZ DE BROWN AS COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**ROCHESTER, NY** — County Executive Adam Bello today announced the confirmation of Dr. Marielena Vélez de Brown to a six-year term as Monroe County’s Commissioner of Public Health. Dr. Vélez de Brown joined the department in 2016 as Deputy Commissioner, and has been Acting Commissioner since March 2024.

*“Dr. Vélez de Brown has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the health and well-being of our community,” said County Executive Bello. “Her expertise and commitment to health equity make her the ideal leader for Monroe County’s Department of Public Health. I thank the legislature for their support in confirming Dr. Vélez de Brown, and I’m confident she will continue driving meaningful improvements for residents throughout the county.”*

The Monroe County Department of Public Health promotes and protects residents’ health through comprehensive services. These include infectious disease control, vaccinations, maternal and child health programs, environmental health and specialized clinics for tuberculosis and sexual health. The department also supports early childhood health and education, helping families access vital resources for child development. Through public education on issues like substance use prevention, chronic disease management and emergency preparedness—and in collaboration with community partners—the department ensures that essential health resources and preventive services reach all Monroe County residents.

Originally from Philadelphia, Dr. Vélez de Brown holds a bachelor’s degree in biology from Swarthmore College and a medical degree from Case Western Reserve University. After completing 3 years of Family Medicine training in Wilmington, Delaware, she completed a fellowship and earned a Master’s of Public Health from the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Rochester. Since joining the Monroe County Department of Public Health, she has prioritized health access for underserved populations, especially for residents with limited English proficiency.

As Medical Director of Monroe County’s Starlight Pediatrics, Dr. Vélez de Brown has strengthened health care and mental health services for children in foster care. Her leadership

in this role and across the Department of Public Health has expanded preventive care and resources for some of the county's most vulnerable residents.

She has also been instrumental in Monroe County's response to the opioid crisis, leading initiatives to distribute naloxone, reduce stigma and educate the public on substance use disorders. Her work continues to bolster county-wide efforts to save lives and provide recovery resources.

*"I'm honored to serve Monroe County in this role," **said Commissioner Dr. Vélez de Brown.** "I want to thank County Executive Bello and the legislature for their trust and support. Our county faces important public health challenges, from tackling the opioid crisis to addressing the social circumstances that influence health, such as poverty, safe housing, educational disparities, racism and violence. I am committed to advancing initiatives that address these needs head-on and promote equity across our community. Working together with our dedicated public health team and community partners, I look forward to building a healthier, more resilient Monroe County where all residents have the opportunity to thrive."*

For more information about the Monroe County Department of Public Health initiatives and programs, visit [monroecounty.gov/health](https://monroecounty.gov/health). To stay updated on the Department's programs and health tips, follow them on social media:

- Facebook: [Monroe County Department of Public Health](https://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountyDepartmentofPublicHealth)
- Instagram: [@monroedoph](https://www.instagram.com/monroedoph)
- Twitter: [@monroedoph](https://twitter.com/monroedoph)

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