

**Heather J. Gauthier****Deputy Director of Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Department of Health**

Heather is an experienced and mission-driven emergency management professional with a strong background in disaster preparedness, human services response coordination, and stakeholder engagement. She currently serves as the Deputy Director of Emergency Preparedness for the Louisiana Department of Health, where she helps lead the state's ESF-8 efforts to coordinate and enhance public health and medical preparedness, response, and recovery across all hazards.

Prior to joining LDH, Heather served as the Emergency Preparedness Project Specialist at the Louisiana Hospital Association, where she led statewide emergency planning initiatives and supported hospitals in enhancing disaster readiness. Her career also includes roles with the American Red Cross and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP). While at GOHSEP, she managed statewide training programs, coordinated COVID-19 testing logistics, oversaw hospital evacuation operations, served as the State's Volunteer and Donations Coordinator, and supported mass care and feeding operations during major disasters.

Heather holds a Bachelor of Science in Geography with a concentration in Disaster Science and Management from Louisiana State University and is a certified Louisiana Emergency Manager (LEM). She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Association (LEPA), where she chairs the Donations Committee and co-chairs the LEM Committee.

Known for her collaborative leadership and deep commitment to community resilience, Heather brings a strategic and operational lens to LDH Emergency Preparedness team.