



## Windsor-Essex County Health Unit Board of Health

### INFORMATION REPORT

**PREPARED BY:** *Administration*

**DATE:** *March 20, 2025*

**SUBJECT:** *alPHa February 2025 InfoBreak*

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The email below is the February monthly newsletter sent by the Association of Local Public Health Units (alPHa) meant to inform the alPHa membership of upcoming activities and events and important information. This particular newsletter provides an overview of the topics and discussion that ensued from your colleagues who are members of boards of health across the province.

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**February 20, 2025**

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**February 2025 InfoBreak**

*This update is a tool to keep alPHa's Members apprised of the latest news in public health including provincial announcements, legislation, alPHa activities, correspondence, and events. Visit us at [alphaweb.org](http://alphaweb.org).*

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## **Leader to Leader - A message from alPHa's Chair - February 2025**



“Leadership is not about a title or a designation.

It’s about impact, influence and inspiration.”

The [alPHa Board of Directors](#) and alPHa staff continue to be actively engaged on your behalf. This month, the alPHa Board of Directors met in their governance role guided by alPHa’s [Strategic Plan](#) with a focus on being the leading, unified voice for Ontario’s public health system. alPHa’s ask of Ontario’s policy influencers and decision-makers is for their support for the goals and objectives of public health, with sustained, sufficient resources to ensure sustainability for Ontario’s locally based network of public health agencies. Here are two recent submissions:

- [alPHa Ontario 2025 Budget Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance](#), and
- [alPHa Public Health Matters Hon. Sylvia Jones, Ontario’s Deputy Premier and Minister of Health](#)

The alPHa 2025 Online Winter Symposium, Section meetings and Workshops were a resounding success! The events were engaging for all participants with polling, facilitated Q&A, and breakout sessions. Thank you to everyone who participated, and to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (co-host sponsor), speakers, moderators, video submissions, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, and Eastern Ontario Health Unit. Special thanks for planning and choreographing an exceptional event to Loretta Ryan, alPHa Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and alPHa staff.

The symposium commenced with an impressive showcase of local public health videos. Keynote, Pete Bombaci of GenWell, spoke on being a catalyst for action to meaningfully improve long-term health and well-being, reduce costs to the healthcare system, increase social cohesion and inclusivity, and drive economic and community benefit.

An informative lineup of topics followed throughout the day. Principals of StrategyCorp, Sabine Matheson and John Perenack, provided insight into the current political situation and offered strategies. alPHa's 1st year anniversary report of the [2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#), facilitated by Maria Sánchez-Keane, was interactive and informative on the progress of alPHa's accomplishments. The South East Health Unit shared their challenges and opportunities, along with what to expect next, as the newly merged health unit moves forward.

The merger conversation carried forward in the afternoon at the Boards of Health Section meeting with the chairs of the newly merged boards of health: Jan O'Neill, Chair, Board of Health, South East Health Unit; Michelle Boileau, Chair, Board of Health, Northeastern Public Health; Ron Black, Chair, Board of Health, Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough Health Unit; and John Bell, Acting Chair, Board of Health, Grand Erie Public Health. Their informative updates were complemented by a presentation on governance roles and responsibilities from James LeNoury, Principal, LeNoury Law, alPHa Legal Counsel, Doug Lawrance, Chair, Northwestern Health Unit, and Ann-Marie Kungl, Chair, Board of Health, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

Two pre-symposium workshops were value-added. Tim Arnold's interactive *Leading Change: The 5 Tensions to Manage Successful Transformation* discussed leadership skills to help manage current and future challenges during this time of change for public health. The second workshop, *Harnessing the Power of 'Where' for Public Health Discussions* by Esri Canada, had a series of presentations of case studies and dynamic discussions, attendees learned how geographic data, real-time maps, and new innovations in geographic technology are connecting Canadian public health teams to uncover local drivers of health inequity, strengthen health emergency preparedness, and improve collaborative decision-making.

Anticipation is building for the alPHa 2025 AGM and Conference in-person in Toronto. This is a tremendous opportunity to network, and to continue the important conversation on the role of local public health in the province's resilient public health system and its demonstrated role for the public health of all Ontarians.

At the Rural Ontario Municipal Association 2025 ROMA Conference in January, it was great to have the chance to connect with many of you. Along with Loretta Ryan, alPHa's CEO, I was also pleased to meet and have a productive discussion with Robin Jones, President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), who also serves on the Board of Health for South East Health Unit.

Perhaps I will see you at The Ontario Public Health Convention TOPHC 2025 in March or at the alPHa 2025 AGM and Conference in June. If you are at either of these events, I look forward to the opportunity to connect.

Stay tuned for the Annual General Meeting Package, which contains the Call for Resolutions, Distinguished Service Award nominations, and Boards of Health elections information.

Thanks to each of you for your individual and collective commitment, and for support to alPHa as we all work to advance the cause of a resilient, sufficiently resourced, local public health system in Ontario.

Trudy Sachowski

Chair, alPHa Board of Directors

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**Resources from the 2025 Winter Symposium, Section Meetings, and Workshops are now available!**



Thank you to all of the alPHa Members who attended this year's Winter Symposium. We were glad to see so many of you engaged in discussions and dialogue on key public health issues. A special thanks goes to alPHa Chair, Trudy Sachowski, for chairing the event. We would also like to thank BOH Section Vice Chair, Tammy DeGiovanni, and COMOH Section Chair, Dr. Lianne Catton, for chairing their meetings.

A huge shoutout goes to Obadiah George from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and Andy Morrisson from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for their generous event and technical support. The event would not have been possible without them!

Thank you to all those who submitted videos from their public health units. We had a strong response and we greatly appreciate your participation.

Lastly, we would like to note and thank the alPHa staff for all of their work to make the Symposium, workshops, Section meetings, and Board meeting a success.

Presentations from this year's Winter Symposium are now available (please see below for more information from Tim Arnold and GenWell). Please note, you will need to log in to the members' side of the website to view the presentations. You can do so [here](#). Please note, we are continuing to receive these, so check back often. Additionally, we will be featuring the Resources from the Esri Canada workshop in next month's newsletter.

If you have not yet filled out the after-event survey, there is still time to do so. You can be entered into a draw for a gift card. The link to the survey is [here](#) and the final date to fill it out is Friday, February 28.

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### **Leading Change - The 5 Tensions to Manage Successful Transformation**



It was an honour to facilitate the "Leading Change" workshop at the Winter Symposium. Thank you (once again) for allowing me to support you in your leadership development journey.

To ensure the learning is put into action, visit [www.timarnold.ca/resources](http://www.timarnold.ca/resources). Once you click the "Leading Change Resources", you can download key slides and a personal action plan from the workshop. You'll also find an 11-question assessment to further your insights, and information on purchasing my recent book, "[Leading Change](#)."

Don't let the workshop be "one-and-done"! Subscribe to "The Leaders' Edge" at [www.timarnold.ca/newsletter](http://www.timarnold.ca/newsletter). This monthly newsletter provides actionable insights and DIY team activities to empower your success at work and in life.

Here's how to reach Tim on social media: [Click here for his LinkedIn](#) page, and [click here for his Instagram page](#).

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## GenWell Resources



We would like to thank Pete Bombaci, CEO and Founder, GenWell, for presenting to the EAs/AAs on Tuesday, February 11 and for being the keynote speaker for the alpha Winter Symposium on Friday, February 14. It was wonderful to hear from him!

The following resources have been available to alpha Members. These are:

- [Presentation](#)
- GenWell Social Health Toolkit
- GenWell Connection Event (May 2-4)
- GenWell Case for Support - A call for your public health unit to participate in a workshop or speaking opportunity.
- GenWell Social Health Workshop Overview - Please note, any alpha Member who books a social health workshop before the end of February will receive a 25 per cent discount.
- A compilation of the GenWell Social Health Toolkit, GenWell Connection Event, GenWell Case for Support, and GenWell Social Health Workshop is available [here](#).
- [Other workshops that GenWell offers](#)

The graphic features a white background with a colorful wavy border at the top. It includes the alPHA logo (Association of Local PUBLIC HEALTH Agencies), the title 'Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027', and a central heading 'Convening the leadership of local public health agencies to:'. Below this are four icons in squares: a profile with sound waves, two hands shaking, a group of people around a heart, and a cluster of people icons. Each icon is followed by a descriptive text block. Dotted lines and arrows point from these four blocks towards a central text box: 'A stronger local public health system'. At the bottom, a blue banner contains the mission statement: 'alPHA's Mission: Serving Ontario's local public health agencies for a strong public health system'.

**alPHA**  
Association of Local  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
Agencies

# Strategic Plan

2024 - 2027

Convening the leadership of local public health agencies to:

-   
Be the unified voice and a trusted advisor on public health
-   
Advance the work of local public health through strategic partnerships and collaborations
-   
Support the sustainability of Ontario's local public health system
-   
Deliver member services to local public health leaders

**A stronger local public health system**

*alPHA's Mission: Serving Ontario's local public health agencies for a strong public health system*

alPHA actively represents all of Ontario's boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers. The association is a unified voice and a trusted advisor on public health, advances the work of local public health through strategic partnerships and collaborations, supports the sustainability of Ontario's local public health system, and delivers member services to local public health leaders. alPHA's Strategic Plan was launched a year ago and acts as a foundational document to achieve the organization's goals and objectives. Thank you to all those who participated in the discussion on how your association is implementing the Strategic Plan.

We would like to thank Maria Sánchez-Keane for leading the session!



alPHa's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is available [here](#).

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**Thank you, Executive Assistants/Administrative Assistants!**

**alPHa**  
Association of Local  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
Agencies

**Executive Assistant/Administrative Assistant Workshop**  
**February 11, 2025**

The 2025 Executive Assistant (EA)/Administrative Workshop (AA), that is taking place **online 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on February 11**, features **Pete Bombaci** from GenWell and is **\$149+HST**. Public health unit staff are facing new and increasing challenges to staying connected both inside and outside of the workplace, resulting in increased mental and physical health challenges. His talk is titled **Building A More Connected Canada Where Everyone Thrives**. It will help you to deepen your understanding of the growing issues of social isolation, disconnection and loneliness, your impact on individuals and society and the power of human connection in the workplace. The workshop will also include an update on alPHa activities.

**About Pete Bombaci:** Pete is the founder of GenWell and is proud to be leading a movement that he truly believes can make the world a happier and healthier place. Formerly the Canadian Country Director for Movember Canada, Pete led an amazing team of people responsible for raising \$142 million dollars over five years, and putting a much needed lens on men's health. Having spent time in the for-profit and not-for-profit worlds, Pete believes that there is a great opportunity to combine the interests of business, schools, government, foundations and individuals in the solution to the disconnected world that we find ourselves in today.

The Winter Symposium is co-hosted by alPHa and Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

**alPHa** Association of Local PUBLIC HEALTH Agencies  
**simcoe muskoka** DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

With generous support from:

**EOHU** Eastern Ontario Health Unit  
**BSEO** Bureau de santé de l'est de l'Ontario  
**Dalla Lana** School of Public Health  
**genwell** HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT  
**esri** Canada

Thank you to all those who attended the Executive Assistant/Administrative Assistant (EA/AA) Workshop. It was a huge success and it's all thanks to your enthusiastic participation! On Tuesday, February 11, EAs/AAs gathered together to increase collaboration and enhance creativity and productivity. We hope you were all able to take some time for yourselves and that you will take what you've learned from GenWell and apply it both inside and outside the workplace. alPHa would like to thank Melanie Dziengo for her leadership and planning on this workshop and Melissa Ziebarth, from Renfrew County and District Health Unit, for her assistance. Additionally, your support for alPHa Member Representatives does not go unnoticed. Thank you for all that you do! Please do not forget to fill out your after-event survey that was sent to you by e-mail. The final date to complete it is Tuesday, February 25.

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## 2025 aPHa Pre-Budget Submission



On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) and its Boards of Health Section, Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health Section, and Affiliate Organizations, aPHa sent in a submission to provide input on the financial requirements for a stable, locally based public health system as part of this year's pre-budget consultation. To read more, click [here](#).

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## Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference recap





alPHa would like to congratulate the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) on a very successful ROMA conference that took place from January 19-21 in Toronto with approximately 2,000 delegates.

Many alPHa members were in attendance, including alPHa representatives - Trudy Sachowski, Chair and Loretta Ryan, Chief Executive Officer. Trudy and Loretta had numerous interactions at the ROMA Conference including a meeting with Robin Jones, President, AMO and an opportunity to speak with the Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health. These are two of the many interactions that took place to continue to actively position and profile local public health with municipal officials and their staff.

Here are some of the AMO documents that were highlighted at the event:

- [Public Awareness Campaign – Provincial Election](#)
  - [Municipalities Under Pressure: The Growing Human and Financial Cost of Ontario's Homelessness Crisis](#)
  - [Pre-Budget Submission](#)
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## TOPHC 2025



TOPHC is hosting a two-day convention that will include one day of virtual presentations and interactive activities and a second day of in-person workshops and networking.

### Important dates

- March 26: In-person Convention
- April 2: Virtual Convention

This year's theme is: Insight to Impact: Leveraging evidence & collective expertise to advance public health practice.

TOPHC brings together a multi-disciplinary community of public health professionals to prevent illness and improve health, by sharing the latest research and information, promoting best practices, and advancing evidence-based public health initiatives and policies. This is a unique opportunity to build and refine practical skills, learn best practices, keep up with new and emerging developments in the field, and network with peers across Ontario. To learn more, click [here](#).

## GenWell: Who, What, and Why?

**genwell**  
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

We're diving into the **who, what, and why** of GenWell to give you a snapshot of what we're trying to accomplish. Reach out and get connected with us to learn more.

**WHO ARE WE?**  
GenWell, a registered Canadian not-for-profit, is Canada's **Human Connection Movement**. It's mission is to make the world a happier and healthier place by emphasizing the importance of **face-to-face social connection**. By **educating, empowering, and catalyzing** everyone in Canada, GenWell encourages proactive steps to improve **health, happiness, longevity**, and society as a whole.

**FOUNDED IN:**  
**2016**

**GOAL TO CONNECT:**  
**41M** 🇨🇦

**WE WORK IN:**

- SCHOOLS
- WORKPLACES
- COMMUNITIES
- SENIORS ORGANIZATIONS
- MUNICIPALITIES

**WHAT DO WE DO?**  
GenWell has developed signature annual campaigns with the ambition to catalyze a broad cross-section of people across Canada to join in activities that build and deepen our connection as humans and as a society.  
**Learn more at:**  
<https://genwell.ca/campaigns/>

We have also developed customized programming to teach and practice human connection in settings that naturally bring together priority demographic groups and facilitate interaction.  
**Learn more at:**  
<https://genwell.ca/programs/>

**WHY DO WE DO IT?**

- **More than 50%** of Canadians feel lonely on a regular basis.
- Canadian businesses lose an est. \$40 billion annually due to the impact of disconnection and loneliness.

Research clearly demonstrates that **social isolation, disconnection, and loneliness** are associated with a greater incidence of major psychological, cognitive, and physical morbidities, and lower perceived quality of life.

Most Canadians do not understand the **importance of human connection and social health** as a **positive, proactive, and inclusive** way to sustain and improve our mental and physical health.

**CONTACT US:**

- 📧 [Info@GenWellProject.org](mailto:Info@GenWellProject.org)
- 🌐 [www.GenWell.ca](http://www.GenWell.ca)
- 📷 [@GenWellProject](https://www.instagram.com/GenWellProject)

This month, GenWell is giving you a snapshot of what they are trying to accomplish. This infographic covers who they are, what they do, and why they do it. Ultimately, their goal is “to make the world a happier and healthier place by emphasizing the importance of face-to-face social connection.” To learn more, click [here](#).

## Boards of Health: Shared Resources



A resource [page](#) is available on alpha's website for Board of Health members to facilitate the sharing of and access to information, orientation materials, best practices, case studies, by-laws, Resolutions, and other resources. **In particular, alpha is seeking resources to share regarding the province's Strengthening Public Health Initiative, including but not limited to, voluntary mergers and the need for long-term funding for local public health.** If you have a best practice, by-law or any other resource that you would like to make available via the newsletter and/or the website, please send a file or a link with a brief description to [gordon@alphaweb.org](mailto:gordon@alphaweb.org) and for posting in the appropriate library.

Resources available on the alpha website include:

- [Orientation Manual for Boards of Health](#) (Revised Jan. 2024)
- [Review of Board of Health Liability, 2018, \(PowerPoint presentation, Feb. 24, 2023\)](#)
- [Legal Matters: Updates for Boards of Health](#) (Video, June 8, 2021)
- [Obligations of a Board of Health under the Municipal Act, 2001](#) (Revised 2021)
- [The Ontario Public Health Standards](#)
- [Public Appointee Role and Governance Overview](#) (for Provincial Appointees to BOH)
- [Ontario Boards of Health by Region](#)
- [List of Units sorted by Municipality](#)
- [List of Municipalities sorted by Health Unit](#)
- [Map: Boards of Health Types](#)

- [Governance Toolkit](#) (Revised 2022)
  - [Risk Management for Health Units](#)
  - [Healthy Rural Communities Toolkit](#)
  - [The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction](#)
  - [NCCHPP Report: Profile of Ontario's Public Health System](#) (2021)
  - [The Municipal Role of Public Health\(2022 U of T Report\)](#)
  - [Boards of Health and Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act](#)
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**Calling all Ontario Boards of Health: Level up your expertise with our training courses designed just for you!**



Don't miss this unique opportunity to enhance your knowledge and strengthen local public health leadership in Ontario.

### **BOH Governance training course**

Master public health governance and Ontario's Public Health Standards. You'll learn all about public health legislation, funding, accountability, roles, structures, and much more. Gain insights into leadership and services that drive excellence in your unit.

### **Social Determinants of Health training course**

Explore the impact of Social Determinants of Health on public health and municipal governments. Understand the context, explore Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and examine various SDOH diagrams to better serve your communities.

Speakers are Monika Turner and Loretta Ryan.

Reserve your spot for in-person or virtual training now! Visit [our website](#) to learn more about the costs for Public Health Units (PHUs). Let's shape a healthier future together.

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## Affiliates update

# Affiliates

Association of Local Public  
Health Agencies

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[Ontario Dietitians in Public Health](#) (ODPH) is pleased to share the announcement that Dr. Valerie Tarasuk, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto, was appointed to the Order of Canada. This prestigious recognition is a testament to Dr. Tarasuk's outstanding contributions to research on household food insecurity in Canada. As principal researcher of [PROOF](#) (an interdisciplinary research program), her research and advocacy has influenced evidence-based policy across Canada and internationally. Her research has informed ODPH's comprehensive health promotion approaches to food insecurity across Ontario's local public health agencies. Congratulations to Dr. Tarasuk!

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## alPHa Correspondence



Through policy analysis, collaboration, and advocacy, alPHa's Members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention, and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities. A complete online library of submissions is available [here](#). These documents are publicly available and can be shared widely.

- [alPHa Letter - PH Matters Infographic #4](#)
- [alPHa Submission - 2025 Ontario Budget](#)

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***Ontario Public Health Directory: January 2025 update***



The [Ontario Public Health Directory](#) has been updated and is available on the alPHa website. Please ensure you have the latest version, which has been dated as of **January 14, 2025**. To view the file, log into the alPHa website.

Please note, we will be updating the directory again soon with regards to the recently announced mergers.

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#### Upcoming DLSPH Events and Webinars

# Dalla Lana

## School of Public Health

- [Black Health Lecture Series](#) (Feb. 25, Mar. 4, Mar. 26)

- [Health Inc Seminar Series: Why wellness sells](#) (Mar. 5)
  - [CQuIPS+ Masterclass: Motivate Improvement in Your Hospital by Telling a Compelling Story with Data](#) (Mar. 7)
  - [Health Summit: Charting a course to accessible, equitable & high quality public health care](#) (Mar. 8)
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## BrokerLink Insurance



Please note, ALPHa's partnership with Aviva is no longer in place. All Members who are with Aviva are encouraged to explore insurance with BrokerLink.

In partnership with ALPHa, [BrokerLink](#) is proud to offer preferred home and auto insurance rates for members, click [here](#) to get a quote. Do you have questions about understanding your car insurance renewal? Our advisors are here to help. Learn about renewing car insurance, and a few of the most common reasons why it's important to always review your annual insurance policy [here](#).



Insurance for Groups

## Annual Insurance Review

BrokerLink Insurance offers members exclusive discounts on home and auto insurance. Through this group insurance plan, members benefit from comprehensive coverage, superior customer service, and insurance that is customized to fit your needs.



Many individuals will receive their policy renewal documents in the mail prior to their renewal date and file them away. However, a lot could have changed in the last 12 months and this is your opportunity to make any updates to your policy before it resets for another year. Always take the time to review your insurance policies before their renewal date.

### Here are some reasons why:

#### You might not have adequate coverage

It is a good time to go over your limits on your coverage and ensure your policies are up-to-date. Take note of the rebuild/replacement value of your home – is it current? Did you start up a home-based business which requires additional coverage? Are there any gaps in coverage?

#### You might be missing out on savings

Renewals are a good time to make sure you are not missing out on any discounts or programs that could be applied to your policy. Insurance companies often introduce new programs or opportunities for savings throughout the year so this is the time to explore if any apply to you. If you are going to see an increase in your premium, ask your broker to shop your insurance with their other markets to ensure you are placed with the right insurance provider. Check your deductible limits to ensure they still fit your needs.

#### Changes to your home or property

Your insurance policy needs to reflect any changes that you have made in the past year. Did you do any home renovations? These could include updates to bathrooms or kitchen, adding a garden shed, extending the deck, putting in a swimming pool - all these improvements need to be reflected on your policy. Also, if you have replaced any big ticket items such as the furnace, hot water tank, appliances – these need to also be updated on your policy to ensure you have proper coverage.

#### Have you made a big purchase?

If you have made a big purchase or inherited an expensive item within the last year, you may want to consider scheduling the item on your policy. Scheduling a valuable item provides peace of mind knowing that it is covered. It also means that these items are not limited to your home policy limits and will ensure you have full coverage.

Rest Assured, BrokerLink Has You Covered\*

To learn more and for your free, no-obligation quote, contact us today.

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## alPHA's mailing address

Please note our mailing address is:

PO Box 73510, RPO Wychwood

Toronto, ON M6C 4A7

For further information, please contact [info@alphaweb.org](mailto:info@alphaweb.org).

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News Releases

The most up to date news releases from the Government of Ontario can be accessed [here](#).

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Our mailing address is:  
PO Box 73510, RPO Wychwood  
Toronto, ON M6C 4A7  
Canada

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