



NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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**(7/16/25) Remembering Rhonda Andrews-Ray, Executive Director/Public Health Administrator
Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start
*A Life Well Lived and Deeply Missed***

It is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that we at Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start share the news of the passing of our colleague and Executive Director/Public Health Administrator, Rhonda Andrews-Ray, who passed away on July 13, 2025 at age 57.

Rhonda was not only a dedicated leader but also a mentor, a friend, and source of strength for our team. Her commitment to our mission, compassion for children and families, and unwavering support of our staff left a lasting mark on our organization and in each of our hearts.

Graduating with a Master's Degree in Biology from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 1995, Rhonda began her career in public health in 1994 as the Public Health Administrator for Marion County Health Department in Salem, Illinois, where she served for six years. She later went on to serve as Public Health Administrator for Fayette County Health Department in Vandalia, Illinois from 2008 to 2018, and completed her career as Executive Director/Public Health Administrator for Southern Seven Health Department in Ullin, Illinois from 2018 to 2025.

Throughout her years of leadership, Rhonda focused her attention on all aspects of public health; touching countless lives. At Southern Seven, her commitment to helping others through vital, life-saving programs and services enabled her to oversee the largest geographical health department in Illinois, and one of only a few Head Start programs in the nation administered by a local health department.

A graveside service for Rhonda Andrews-Ray will be held at 11:00 AM on Saturday, July 19, 2025, with Mark Howe officiating, at Pleasant Grove Christian Church Cemetery in Cisne, Illinois.

The visitation will be from 5:00 PM until 8:00 PM on Friday, July 18, 2025 at Collier Funeral Home, located at 211 West 5th Street Benton, Kentucky 42025.

Memorial contributions may take the form of donations made in memory of Rhonda Andrews-Ray to Colon Cancer Foundation 10 Midland Ave, Suite M-06 Port Chester, NY 10573.

Rhonda will be deeply missed by all those that knew and loved her. For those who worked with her at Southern Seven Health Department and Head Start, her mission of caring, steadfastness, and dedication to those she served throughout the lower seven counties in Illinois will forever be the purpose that guides us.

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