



2026 Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference

Date/Time:

April 16th & 17th 2026

0800-1600

Location:

Desales University
University Center Building

2755 Station Ave
Center Valley PA 18034

Keynote Speaker:



Savannah Maddison

Maury County, TN
Fire Department

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Lehigh County
Fire Chiefs Association



Community Partners



LEHIGH VALLEY EMERGENCY SERVICES CONFERENCE

Conference Committee



Joseph Light – Operations & Training Coordinator, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency (*Conference Chair*)

Dr. Ahmet Yayla – Associate Professor; Director, Center for Homeland Security, Desales University

Dane Carroll – EMC, Upper Saucon Twp EMA

Tanya Hook – Director, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency

Nicole Burton – Emergency Planner, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency

Kevin Krotzer – Special Operations Coordinator, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency

Kevin McGowan – Outreach Manager, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency

Valerie Sosa – Administrative Assistant, Lehigh County Emergency Management Agency

Jeff Kelly – EMC, South Whitehall Twp EMA

Christopher Confalone – Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Eastern PA EMS Council

Carrie Frey – Director of Operations, Cetronia Ambulance

Mike Wasko – Training Officer, PEMA Eastern Area Office

Ryan Rightley – Program Assistant, Desales University

Jesus Delgado – Desales University

Ryan Hay – Administrator, Public Safety & Emergency Operations, LVHN

Josh Houck - Director, Emergency Preparedness, LVHN



Complementary Wi-fi Access



PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING WIFI NETWORK IS ONLY AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY CENTER BUILDING AND SURROUNDING AREAS

To connect to complimentary Wi-Fi while at the conference:

1. Turn on your device's Wi-Fi and select: Desales Guest
2. You should be automatically directed to Desales University's webpage to connect to the complimentary Wi-Fi.

The complimentary Desales Wi-Fi has strong upload and download speeds to support your internet needs during the conference.

Get the App!



Google Play
Store

Apple App Store



App & Wi-Fi

WELCOME MESSAGE



Welcome to the 2026 Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference

On behalf of the planning committee, welcome to the 2026 Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference—an event built by and for the dedicated professionals who serve and protect our communities.

This year's conference brings together emergency responders, emergency managers, healthcare professionals, public safety leaders, and industry partners from across the region and beyond. Over the next few days, you will have the opportunity to learn from leading experts, engage in meaningful training, explore innovative technologies, and connect with colleagues who share your commitment to service and resilience.

Our sessions span a wide array of disciplines, including fire, EMS, law enforcement, emergency management, public health, cybersecurity, and more. Whether you're here for hands-on training, dynamic panel discussions, or to explore our expanded exhibit hall, we're confident you'll leave with new knowledge, fresh perspectives, and valuable connections.

We thank you for your continued dedication to public safety and preparedness. Your presence here helps strengthen the entire emergency services community—and for that, we are grateful.

Stay safe, learn well, and enjoy the conference!

HISTORY OF LVESC

The Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference (LVESC) is the region's premier training and networking event for emergency services professionals. Hosted annually in the heart of Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, the conference brings together responders and leaders from fire services, emergency medical services, law enforcement, emergency management, healthcare, public safety communications, and more.

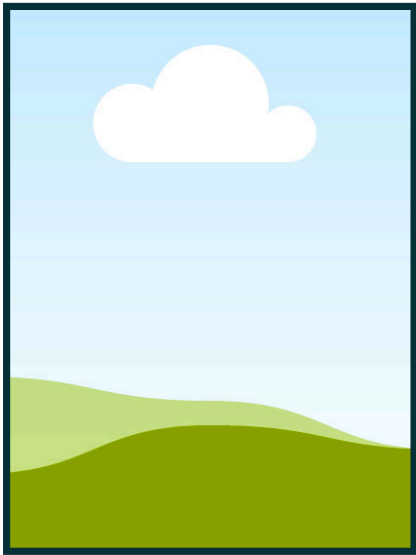
Our mission is to provide high-quality, interdisciplinary training that strengthens individual capabilities and fosters regional collaboration. Through hands-on courses, dynamic keynote presentations, panel discussions, and an expansive exhibit hall, LVESC equips attendees with the tools and knowledge needed to face today's evolving threats and challenges.

The 2026 conference features:

- Over 30 educational sessions
- Specialized tracks for EMS, Fire, Law Enforcement, and Emergency Management
 - Live demonstrations and scenario-based training
 - A vibrant exhibit hall featuring the latest products and services
- Networking opportunities with regional, state, and national partners

Whether you're new to public safety or a seasoned professional, the Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference is designed to educate, inspire, and connect.



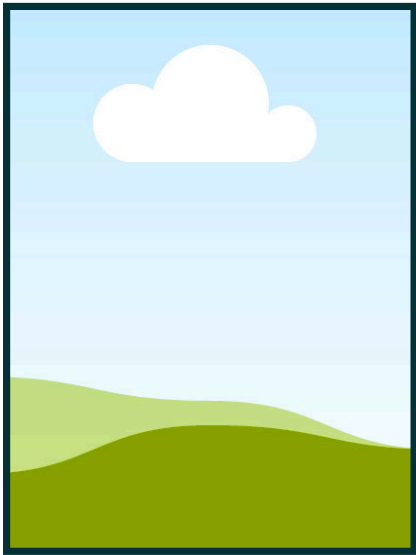


LEHIGH VALLEY EMERGENCY MANAGER OF THE YEAR



Body

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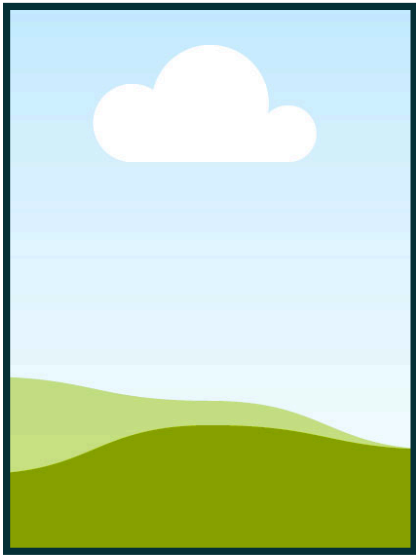


LEHIGH VALLEY EMS PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



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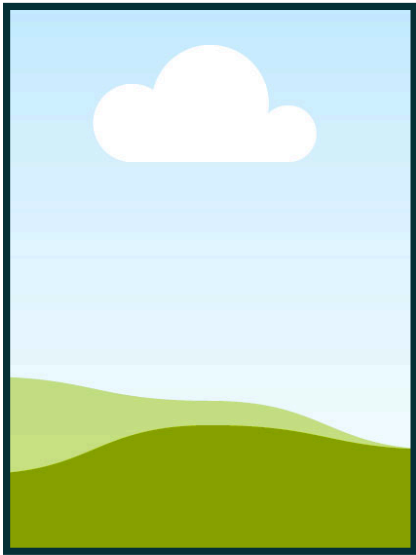


LEHIGH VALLEY FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR



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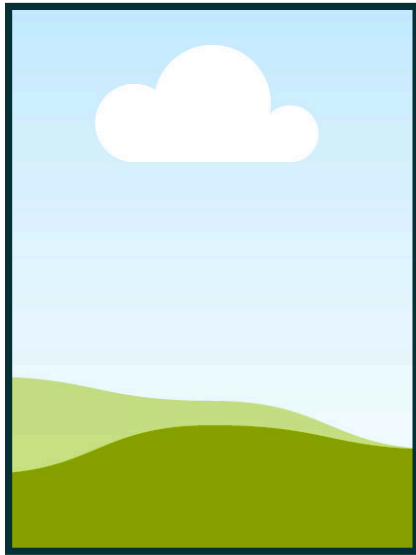


LEHIGH VALLEY POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Body

Body



Desales Criminal Justice / Homeland Security Student of the Year



Body

Body

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

**Thursday
April 16th**

Registration 0700-0800

FOOD
Continental Breakfast
0700-1100

Opening Ceramones
0800-0830

Keynote Speaker
0830-1030

Sessions
1100-1200

Lunch
1200-1300

Sessions
1300-1600

**Friday
April 17th**

Registration 0700-0800

FOOD
Continental Breakfast
0700-1100

NEHCC MCI Training
0800-1600

Sessions 0800-1200

Awards Lunch
1200-1300

Sessions
1300-1600

**Times subject to change based on presenter
availability. Check app/website for updates.**

CONFERENCE ID REQUIRED AT ALL EVENTS AND SESSIONS



Savannah Maddison

Savannah Maddison is a dynamic social media influencer, AEMT, firefighter, and Public Information Officer with the Maury County Fire Department in Tennessee. Known for her powerful voice in the emergency services community, Savannah is an acclaimed motivational speaker and a visionary thought leader who brings a fresh, forward-looking perspective to the fire service in today's digital age.

At the 2026 Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference, Savannah is thrilled to deliver a keynote focused on mass gathering preparation, sharing insights from both a department readiness and PIO perspective. She'll explore how social media can be a powerful tool to inform, engage, and prepare the public in advance of high-risk events — a topic more relevant than ever.

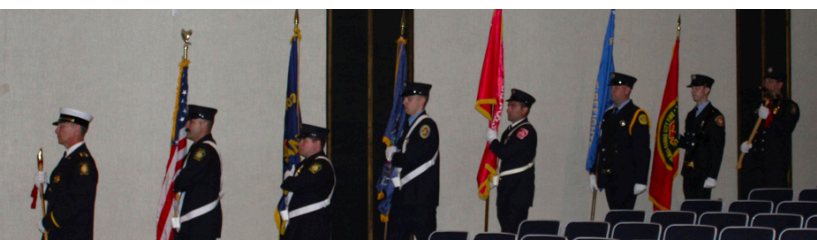
This keynote will inspire, educate, and challenge attendees to think differently about emergency preparedness, communication, and the evolving role of the fire service. Whether you're in operations, administration, or public outreach, this is a session you won't want to miss.



PRESENTED BY



Join us for our opening ceremonies beginning promptly at 0800 in the Commonwealth / Hurd Conference Rooms. Opening speeches and remarks as well as administrative overview of the conference will take place. Special Guests and VIP's will be in attendance for a networking opportunity.



FULL AGENDA

Thursday, April 16th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

0700-0800 | Registration & Continental Breakfast

0800-0830 | Opening Ceremonies

0830-1030 | Keynote Speaker

At just 10 years old, Savannah Maddison launched a nationwide movement to support deployed service members—proving that one voice, no matter how young, can create lasting change. Today, as an award-winning author, speaker, and founder of Savannah's Soldiers, she continues to inspire audiences with her message of courage, leadership, and service. In this moving keynote, Savannah shares her personal journey, lessons learned in mobilizing communities, and how purpose-driven leadership can transform lives—even in the most challenging circumstances. Her story is a powerful reminder of the impact we all can make—especially those in emergency services—when we lead with compassion, resilience, and heart.

0930-1230 | Psychological First Aid Training

1100-1200 | If Everything's Important, Nothing Is: Prioritization in Emergency Services

In the high-stakes world of emergency services, everything can feel urgent—but not everything is important. This one-hour session will help emergency service leaders and team members refocus their priorities by “defining their why” and developing a shared language of importance across their organizations. Attendees will explore the difference between importance and urgency, clarify roles and responsibilities, and learn to identify the tasks that truly move the needle. The session will also highlight how technology can support better prioritization and how individuals can achieve greater work-life harmony without compromising mission readiness.

FULL AGENDA

Thursday, April 16th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

1100-1200 | UAS Integration and Utilization for Special Events and Mass Gatherings

As the role of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) in public safety continues to expand, this session will explore how drone technology is being integrated into planning and operational support for special events and mass gatherings. Led by members of the Lehigh County Drone Team (Station 43), attendees will gain an in-depth understanding of how UAS can be deployed for real-time situational awareness, crowd monitoring, search and rescue, and logistical support. The presentation will include case examples from regional events, discuss FAA regulatory considerations, outline inter-agency coordination, and share lessons learned for effective drone deployment. Whether you're starting a UAS program or looking to enhance an existing one, this session provides actionable insight for emergency managers, law enforcement, and public safety professionals.

1200-1300 | Lunch

1300-1400 | Critical Decision Making

This program will discuss current theories regarding human decision making in critical and non-critical situations. Factors that lead to poor decisions and strategies to mitigate these factors. How Crew Resource Management can be used in EMS to improve patient safety, satisfaction and treatment. Barriers to effective communication and strategies to mitigate these barriers

1300-1400 | Mental Wellness for Frontline Personnel

This course, "Mental Wellness for Frontline Personnel," is designed to provide essential knowledge and strategies for maintaining mental health in high-stress professions. Tailored for emergency responders, medical personnel, and other frontline workers, the course explores the unique challenges faced by these professionals and offers practical tools for building resilience and managing stress. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of mental wellness, stress management techniques, and the importance of peer support in high-pressure environments.

1300-1400 | Public Information during Mass Gatherings and Special Events

Body

FULL AGENDA

Thursday, April 16th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

1410-1600 | FBI Presentation

Body

1430-1600 | Butler County Mass Gathering Chaos

On July 13, 2024, during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, a mass gathering escalated into national headlines when an attempted assassination of then former President Donald Trump occurred. This session provides a firsthand operational case study of the challenges faced by local emergency services during and after the incident. Butler County Department of Emergency Services will walk participants through the complexities of planning for high-profile events, managing chaos amid active threats, coordinating with state and federal partners, and maintaining public safety under pressure. Lessons learned and best practices will be shared to strengthen planning, communication, and command operations during politically charged or high-risk events.

1500-1600 | Dementia Training for the First Responder

FULL AGENDA

Friday, April 17th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

0700-0800 | Registration & Continental Breakfast

0800-1600 | Mass Casualty Incident Basic Training

This course will review common MCI principals, lessons learned from prior incidents, and include hands on practice utilizing scenario-based training. While the core audience for this program is EMS providers, others in healthcare and emergency services will benefit greatly. Integration between bystanders, on-site representatives and emergency responders is key to successful MCI mitigation.

NO Cost to attend this training

Register Here: <https://forms.office.com/r/iS4UeJ3cZ3>

0800-0930 2025 Hudson River Helicopter Crash Case Study by NYC OEM

On a clear morning in 2025, a private helicopter made an emergency water landing in the Hudson River, triggering a large-scale, multi-agency response from local, state, and federal agencies. This case study, led by representatives from NYC OEM, walks attendees through the timeline of events, response coordination, and lessons learned from this high-profile incident. Topics will include unified command operations, victim rescue and accountability, public information management, aviation incident protocols, and coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Participants will gain critical insight into how a densely populated urban area can effectively manage a complex incident with limited warning.

1030-1200 CISA Special Events Planning & Mass Gatherings for Emergency Services

Public gatherings are increasingly vulnerable to violent attacks and criminal activity because of their relative accessibility and large number of potential targets. While remaining vigilant in the deterrence of traditional targets (i.e., national assets such as the electric grid and national supply chain) and high-profile events (i.e., Super Bowl and Presidential Inauguration), it's equally important to focus on securing public gatherings.

Public gatherings, also referred to as mass gatherings, are places where people gather freely together in a particular location for a specific purpose and are often associated with large crowds. These include places like music festivals, sporting events, places of worship, restaurants, and shopping centers.

These locations are easily accessible and often have minimal security, increasing their vulnerability to a variety of security risks. Given the threats towards, and incidents against, public gathering locations or events, it is important to understand the potential operational impacts from a successful attack, as well as the corresponding protective measures that can be taken to enhance their security. By connecting with local authorities, developing plans to identify issues and support incident response, training staff and volunteers, and reporting concerns to emergency authorities, many incidents may be mitigated or avoided.

FULL AGENDA

Friday, April 17th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

1200-1300 | Lunch

1300-1400 | Allentown EMS Bike Team Event Planning

Planning for large events in urban and crowded environments requires mobility, speed, and flexibility—qualities the Allentown EMS Bike Team delivers during high-traffic incidents. This session offers a detailed look at how the Allentown EMS Bike Team prepares for, deploys, and operates during major public events, including parades, festivals, concerts, and protests. Attendees will gain insight into pre-event planning, route reconnaissance, medical supply configuration, communication strategies, team coordination, and integration with event command structures. Real-world case examples and lessons learned will help attendees understand how to build or enhance a bike team to improve EMS coverage in areas where traditional vehicles may struggle to navigate.

1300-1400 | Philadelphia I-95 Bridge Collapse Lessons Learned

In June 2023, a tanker truck fire caused a catastrophic collapse of a section of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia—one of the busiest travel corridors on the East Coast. This session offers a comprehensive review of the incident, focusing on the emergency response, multi-agency coordination, and rapid infrastructure restoration efforts that followed. Attendees will gain insights into how emergency management, transportation agencies, fire services, and law enforcement came together to manage traffic disruption, public communication, and responder safety in a high-pressure, high-visibility environment. The session will also explore lessons learned that can be applied to future infrastructure emergencies, emphasizing preparedness, interagency collaboration, and continuity of operations.

1400-1500 | Events Security and Mass Gatherings in NYC

1400-1500 | Hold For Desales

FULL AGENDA

Friday, April 17th

For up-to-date information, please check the app.

1500-1600 | Desales Student Poster Presentations

**1500-1600 | Psychology of Mass Gatherings (Jesus working on
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LESTA.

LEHIGH EMERGENCY SERVICES
TRAINING ACADEMY



640 W. Hamilton St. 8th Floor
Allentown, PA 18101-2117

610-782-4600

lesta@lehighcounty.org

WHAT IS THE LEHIGH EMERGENCY SERVICES TRAINING ACADEMY (LESTA)?

Located in the heart of Lehigh County, LESTA provides world-class training and certification for emergency services personnel. From firefighting to medical response, our goal is to equip professionals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to serve their communities with excellence.

The Lehigh Emergency Services Training Academy (LESTA) was established to coordinate the delivery of training to all emergency service organizations within Lehigh County, PA. Through partnerships with several public safety training organizations, LESTA seeks to provide high-quality programs for first responders and is committed to meeting the training needs of all first responders in Lehigh County.



Pennsylvania Eastern Area Training Committee

Chairman: Joseph Light, Lehigh County
Co-Chair: David Elmore, Luzerne County



Who We are:

The Pennsylvania Eastern Area Training Committee is a dynamic and dedicated organization committed to advancing training and development of Emergency Management, Fire, Rescue, Hazmat, EMS and Law Enforcement within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Eastern region. With a strong history of service and collaboration, this committee plays a pivotal role in promoting professional growth, education, and networking opportunities for individuals and organizations across various industries.

Mission:

Pennsylvania's Eastern Area Training Committee's mission is to facilitate the growth and excellence of emergency management professionals and organizations by providing high-quality training and development opportunities, fostering collaboration, and promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

Vision:

The vision of the Pennsylvania Eastern Area Training Committee is to be a leading force in promoting continuous learning and development, contributing to the economic and social well-being of the region, and empowering individuals and organizations to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

Member Counties/Organizations: Berks County, Bucks County, Carbon County, Chester County, Columbia County, Delaware County, Lackawanna County, Lehigh County, Luzerne County, Monroe County, Montgomery County, Montour County, Northampton County, Northumberland County, Philadelphia, Schuylkill County, Susquehanna County, Wayne County, Wyoming County, PEMA Eastern Area Office, Northeast Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force, PA State Corrections, Eastern PA EMS Council, Northeast Health Care Collation, PA Dept of Health, South East Counter Terrorism Task Force, and North Central Counter Terrorism Task Force.





**DESALES
UNIVERSITY**

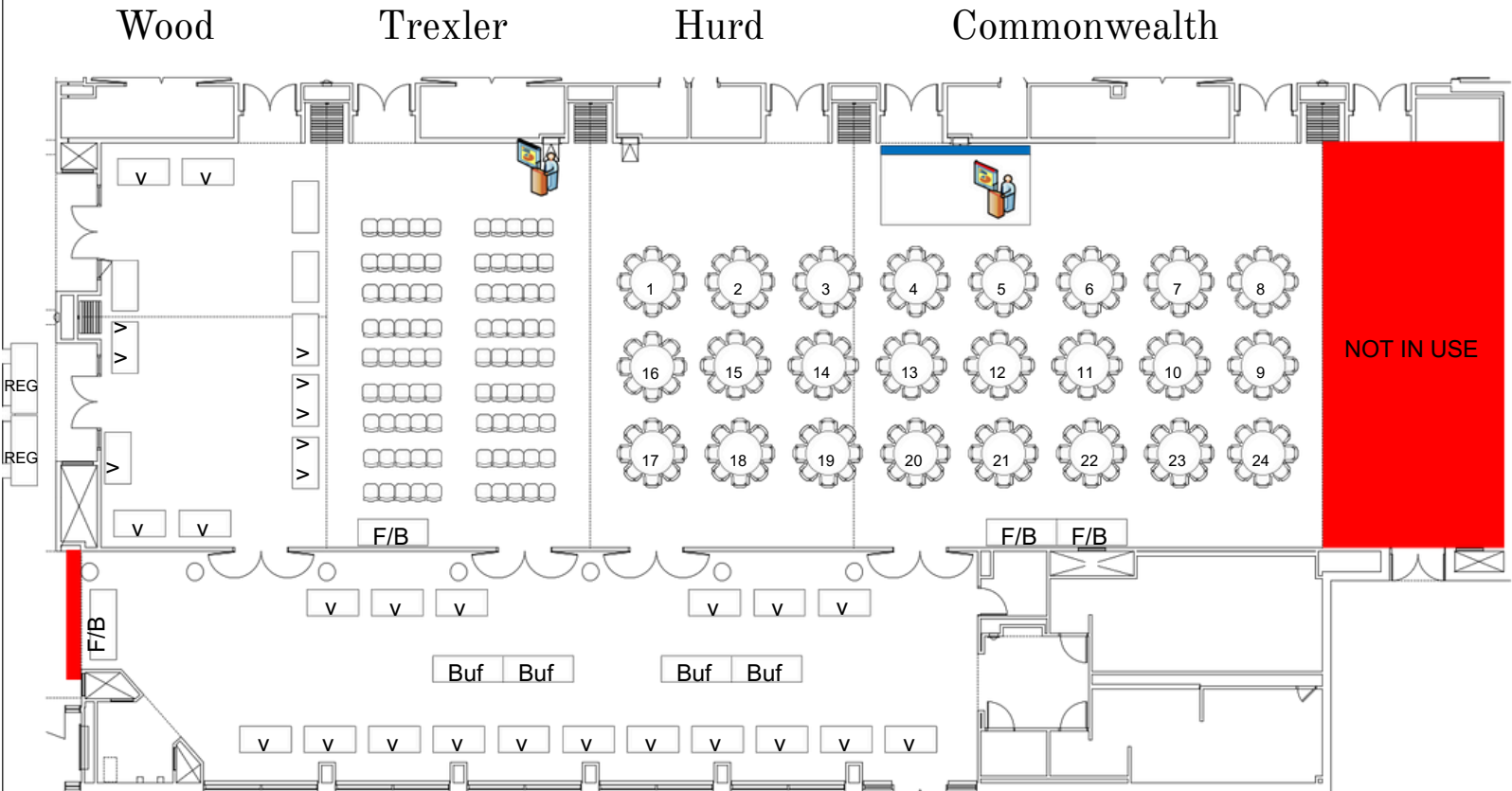


**Main Entrance
University Center**



Venue Layout

EVENT: Lehigh County Emergency Management
DATE: 4/16/26 - 4/17-26



- 24 Tables of 8 (Comm/Hurd)
- Seating for 192
- Trexler – Theatre for 90
- Wood/Heritage – 12 Vendor Tables
- Gallery -17 Vendor Tables First Bay
- of Dining Hall