ASU Law adds online specialized master's degree for health care professionals

New online degree in health care compliance and administration launches in 20th year of Master of Legal Studies program

By Kourtney Kelley, ASU News
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The Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University has launched a new graduate degree focused on health care compliance and administration while celebrating 20 years of its Master of Legal Studies, or MLS, program.

"For 20 years, the MLS program has reflected ASU Law's commitment to expanding access to legal education and preparing professionals to lead in complex industries," said Stacy Leeds, the Willard H. Pedrick Dean and Regents and Foundation Professor of Law. "The launch of MLS Health continues that tradition by equipping students with the legal and regulatory knowledge needed to strengthen health care organizations and serve their communities."

The new Master of Legal Studies in health care compliance and administration, or MLS Health, is designed to prepare professionals to navigate complex health care regulations and lead within highly regulated environments.

The program builds on ASU Law's experience in compliance education and responds to growing workforce demand across the health care sector. It will be the sixth degree offered through ASU Law, reflecting the program's continued growth into specialized fields.

"This new degree reflects where the industry is headed," said Robert "Joey" Dormady, assistant dean of graduate programs and new education initiatives at ASU Law. "Health care organizations are facing increasing regulatory complexity, and they need professionals who understand how to lead within those environments. The MLS Health is built to meet that need."

The launch coincides with a milestone for ASU Law's MLS program, which is marking its 20th anniversary. Since its inception, the MLS has expanded access to legal education for professionals who do not plan to practice law but need a strong understanding of legal and regulatory systems.

Over the past two decades, the program has grown to include more than 20 emphasis areas and flexible learning options for working professionals. ASU Law is now ranked No. 1 in the nation for legal master's graduates, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

"Reaching 20 years of the MLS program is a testament to ASU Law's commitment to accessibility and innovation," Dormady said. "From the beginning, the goal was to open legal education to a broader audience. That mission continues to guide everything we do."

The MLS Health degree expands on ASU Law's existing health care compliance offerings by providing a dedicated pathway for students seeking deeper specialization. The curriculum focuses on regulatory frameworks, risk management and leadership within health care organizations.

Graduates will be prepared for leadership and administrative roles in hospitals, health systems, insurance organizations and government agencies, as well as compliance positions across the health care industry.

"Being able to say, 'I'm a doctor and…' or, 'I'm a nurse and…' The 'and' matters," said ASU Law alumnus John Shufeldt (JD '05), president and chief medical officer of VivaMed BioPharma.

Shufeldt is a physician, entrepreneur, attorney and educator known for founding NextCare Urgent Care and helping shape innovation in health care, medicine and technology. A longtime Arizona leader, he has earned degrees in medicine, business and law, and most recently helped launch ASU's John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering.

"Everything you learn (in the MLS Health program) will be directly applicable to your career in health care. Hedge against the future, hedge against burnout and also hedge against what you're going to need to know as health care evolves," he said. "If you want to be an entrepreneur in the health care space, if you want to work for a hospital in their compliance department or the regulatory department, or a startup or a drug company or big pharma, you absolutely need to know this information."

The MLS Health program will be offered online, allowing students the flexibility to continue working while earning their degree.

"We're proud of what the MLS has become over the past two decades," Dormady said. "And we're even more excited about where it's going next."

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Main image



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