The California Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the CA Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund?

The California Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund is a bold, innovative proposal to provide resources directly to community-based organizations, including clinics, and tribal organizations (CBOs) to identify the most pressing health and racial justice issues in their communities and develop solutions to address them. Funded initiatives will: 1) reduce health and social inequities that impact communities of color and other historically marginalized communities and 2) transform community conditions and institutional government systems to promote racial justice.

In another year of historic budget surplus, in addition to the funding for health departments in the Governor’s January 2022 budget proposal, co-sponsors support an ongoing commitment of at least $100 million to the Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund to support CBOs as part of a comprehensive approach to improving the health and well-being of our communities.

2. Why does California need a Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund?

Latinx, Black, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Asian American, American Indian, LGBTQ and low-income communities are bearing the brunt of health and/or social impacts of COVID-19 including a higher risk of contracting and dying from COVID-19, high rates of job and income loss, insecure housing, and food insecurity. 1,2

Major contributing risk factors include a legacy of structural racism which has resulted in an unfair burden of largely preventable pre-existing health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes. We spend billions to treat these diseases but little to change the community conditions that drive them such as lack of access to healthy food; crowded or insufficient housing; and unstable employment. 3,4

3. Why is it critical to provide funding to community-based organizations, including nonprofits, community clinics and tribal organizations?

CBOs have played essential roles in containing COVID-19 by identifying local barriers to testing and vaccination and serving as trusted messengers in their communities. These on-the-ground organizations have first-hand knowledge of local community conditions and how they impact health and racial justice. For far too long, CBOs’ efforts have been constrained by inadequate, inflexible, and discontinuous funding which prevents them from taking successful policies or programs to scale or initiating new ones to address emerging issues.

4. What types of programs will the California Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund Support?

Health Equity grants will support organizations to take action to reduce health inequities at the local level by addressing the social determinants of health which drive preventable diseases such as: 1) housing security, 2) food security & healthy food systems, 3) economic stability, 4) schools and childcare, 5) community violence & hate crimes, 6) youth criminal justice, and 7) health promoting built environments & environmental justice.

Racial Justice grants will support innovative approaches to promote racial justice via systems and governance changes such as: 1) overcoming structural barriers to racial equity in how government activities are implemented, 2) improving data systems and collection to ensure that demographic data recognizes all Californians, 3) supporting racially equitable leadership and participation in sectors such as arts and culture, technology, and research.
The range of allowable uses is intentionally broad. The health and social impacts of COVID-19 at a community level are not wholly reflected in statewide data sets. Local needs assessments are critical tools for community leaders to identify the most pressing inequities in their communities and tailor best practices to local circumstances.

5. What types of organizations will be eligible for funding?
Nonprofit organizations, community clinics, and tribal organizations which focus exclusively on American Indian and Alaska Native populations will be eligible to apply for funds.

6. How will funds be distributed?
Health equity grants shall be awarded to eligible applicants from specific geographic areas based on elevated rates of death from COVID-19 and high risk of other health inequities evidenced by social and environmental indicators of health. Grants will be awarded to initiatives that focus on populations that experience the highest rates of health and social inequities. At least one area in every region of CA shall be selected.

Racial justice grants shall be awarded to applicants that: demonstrate meaningful engagement with disproportionately impacted communities, have a direct impact of racial equity, and demonstrate equitable practices in design and implementation including in staffing, contracting, and targeting beneficiaries. Both programs will set aside a portion of funds for small CBOs.

7. How will the Fund be overseen?
An Oversight and Accountability Committee with diverse representation will be established to collaborate with California Department of Public Health’s Office of Healthy Equity (OHE) in guiding the distribution, implementation, and assessment of impact of local and regional grants dispersed by the Fund. All grantees from the same geographic area will be required to participate in local collaboratives that include their local health departments to ensure coordination of efforts.

8. How will the impacts of the Fund be measured?
OHE will contract with an independent entity to collect data and measure the impact of initiatives in each of the targeted areas. The entity will provide technical assistance to grantees to develop continuous quality improvement strategies to achieve measurable improvements in the effectiveness of funded projects. Best practices in community-based participatory research will be incorporated in collecting and analyzing information from grantees to ensure accountability and determine effectiveness of projects. Evaluation results will be compiled annually and presented to the Oversight Committee.

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1 https://covid19.ca.gov/equity/
3 https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health
4 https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/racism-disparities/index.html
Over 200 organizations have signed on in support of the
Health Equity and Racial Justice Fund:

Abrazar, Inc.
Access Reproductive Justice
Albie Aware Breast Cancer Foundation
Alcohol Justice
Alliance for a Better Community
AltaMed Health Services
American Heart Association
API Equality-LA
APLA Health
APTP SAC
Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL)
Asian Resources, Inc.
Asian Youth Center
BANJ Health Center Inc.
Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)
Be Smooth, Inc.
Berkeley Food Institute
Black Leadership Council
Black Women for Wellness Action Project
BreastfeedLA
CA4Health
California Access Coalition
California Association of Nonprofits (CalNonprofits)
California Black Health Network
California Black Women's Collective
California Black Women's Health Project
California Chronic Care Collaborative in San Diego County
California Food and Farming Network
California Health Collaborative
California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
California Primary Care Association
California Reinvestment Coalition
California School Nurses Organization
California School-Based Health Alliance
California State University Channel Islands, Department of Health Science
California Urban Partnership
CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates
Californiaians for Safety and Justice
Capitol City Black Nurses Association
Central California LGBTQIA+/2S Collaborative
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC)
Central Valley Pacific Islander Alliance
Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño
Centro Del Inmigrante
Ceres Community Project
ChangeLab Solutions
Changing Tides Family Services
Children's Cause Orange County
Children’s Defense Fund-California
Christie's Place
Chula Vista Elementary School District
Comité Cívico Del Valle
Common Threads
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo
Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF)
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County
Community Health Councils
Community Health Partnership, Inc.
Cooperation Humboldt
CRLA Foundation
Cultiva La Salud
Detour Empowers FANCY Teen Girls
Dignity Health
DOCS4POC
Dovetail Learning, Inc.
Ecology Center
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Empowerment Association
End Hep C SF
Esperanza Community Housing Corporation
Essential Access Health
Face to Face, Ending HIV in Sonoma County
Faith in the Valley
First 5 Alameda County
Fresno Barrios Unidos
Fresno Community Health Improvement Partnership (FCHIP)
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)
Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce
Gods' Grace Outreach Ministries, International
Health Access California
Healthy African American Families
Healthy Hearts Institute
HEART of Davis
Helpline Youth Counseling
Hemophilia Council of California
Hmong Cultural Center
Human Impact Partners (HIP)
Humanidad Therapy & Education Services
I Am Love
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective
Institute for Public Strategies
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (AiArthritis)
Jakara Movement
Justice in Aging
JW Healthcare Insights
KIXE PBS
Korean Community Center of the East Bay
Korean Community Services
Latino Coalition for a Healthy California
LC Disability Consulting
Leah's Pantry
Let's Kick ASS AIDS Survivor Syndrome
LifeLong Medical Care
Little Manila Rising
Liver Coalition of San Diego
Loma Linda University School of Public Health
Los Angeles Christian Health Centers
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches
Mark Horton LLC
Maternal and Child Health Access
Mental Health Advocacy Services
Mental Health America of Los Angeles
Merced County Department of Public Health
Mi Familia Vota
Mid-City Community Advocacy Network
Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP)
Multi-Ethnic Collaborative of Community Agencies
Multicultural Health Foundation
Mulvaneys B&L
NARAL Pro-Choice California
National Harm Reduction Coalition
National Health Law Program
National Union of Health Care Workers
NextGen California
NICOS Chinese Health Coalition
North Coast Clinics Network
Northern California Center for Well-Being
Nourish California
Nutrition and Fitness Collaborative of the Central Coast (NFCCC)
Ontrack Program Resources
Open Door Community Health Centers
Pacific Asian Counseling Services
Painted Brain
Partners in Care Foundation
Pesticide Action Network
Physicians for a Healthy California
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California
PRC
Prevention Institute
Public Health Advocates
Public Health Institute
Public Health Strategies
Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition
Reach Out
Regional Asthma Management and Prevention
Regional Pacific Islander Taskforce - Bay Area
River Oak Center for Children
Roberts Family Development Center
Roots Community Health Center
Roots of Change
RYSE
Sacramento Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Advisory Board
Salud Para La Gente
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
San Francisco Senior and Disability Action
Sanctuary of Hope
Scripps Health
Second Baptist Church
Seeds of Hope
SEIU2015
Sepsis Alliance
SISTAHFRIENDS Women's Counseling Services
South Bay Community Services
Southside Coalition of Community Health Centers
SSG/Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement
SSG/PALS for Health
St. James Infirmary
Street Level Health Project
Substratum Systems LLC
Tarzana Treatment Centers Inc.
Thai Community Development Center
The Central Valley Urban Institute
The Children's Partnership
The Coalition of Orange County Community Health Centers
The Fresno Center
The G.R.E.E.N Foundation
The Health Trust
The Índigo Project
The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
The Unity Council
The Urban Collaborative Project
Think Dignity (formerly Girls Think Tank)
Toberman Neighborhood Center
Transformational Health and Wellness
Trinity Lutheran Church
United Parents and Students
United Way Bay Area
United Ways of California
United Women of East Africa Support Team
University of California Berkeley School of Public Health
Urban Strategies Council
Veritable Vegetable
Village Movement California
WALKSacramento
Watsonville Law Center
Wellspring Women’s Center
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Wholesome Wave
Wintu Education and Cultural Council
Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Diseases (WORLD)
Worksite Wellness LA
YES Nature to Neighborhoods
Youth Forward
Youth UpRising