



County Executive
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Governmental Relations and
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Elisia De Bord

County of Sacramento

Board of Supervisors
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June 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Nesom
Governor of California

Re: Support Budget Restoration to Future of Public Health

Dear Governor Newsom:

Sacramento County is pleased with the Legislature's budget restorations to the Future of Public Health investment.

Sacramento County serves as the first line of defense against all public health threats in our community. (See Attached Public Health Fact Sheet.) To carry out this key responsibility, we rely on a highly skilled and specialized workforce. The public health workforce has faced significant challenges over the past several years responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including burnout and harassment by members of the public. At the start of the COVID pandemic response, the Communicable Disease Control Unit consisted of three full time employees of public health nurses and two administrative supports. As the number of calls from hospitals and the public increased, the team was quickly overwhelmed, and it took time to train new people as funding was made available. This slowed down the ability to conduct contact tracing at a critical time. In addition, when the vaccine was first made available, the immunization team of five nurses was not able to fulfill the need for large scale vaccination clinics, and we depended heavily on medical volunteers to ramp up and meet the demand for vaccinations.

Future of Public Health provided Sacramento County with ongoing funding to rebuild our workforce and infrastructure. We focused efforts to bolster the infrastructure and recruited 10 public health nursing positions for the Communicable Disease Control, Immunization and Field Nursing Units; two epidemiologists; two microbiologists; and several administrative and management positions for a total of 40 new positions. This boost in staffing enabled us to be well-prepared to manage the ensuing Mpox epidemic and measles exposures. The additional positions also enabled us to create a Health and Racial equity Unit that focused on addressing health disparities and inequities. We have also been able to embark on workforce development initiatives to improve recruitment and retention and prepare our workforce to plan for and adequately address public health threats to our community.

These investments represent a few initiatives dedicated to strengthening the governmental public health workforce and infrastructure of our state. California must continue to support the governmental public health workforce and ensure robust and capable public health departments.

June 4, 2024

-2-

For these reasons, Sacramento County asks you to safeguard public health funding and maintain the ongoing \$300 million Future of Public Health investment. Please feel free to contact me at (916) 874-4627 or deborde@saccounty.gov.

Respectfully,



Elisia De Bord

Governmental Relations and Legislative Officer

Attachment: Sacramento County Public Health Fact Sheet

cc: Sacramento County Delegation

Chair and Members, Board of Supervisors

Audrey Ratajczak, Cruz Strategies

Michelle Gibbons, County Health Executives Association of California

SACRAMENTO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH OVERVIEW

Through the 2022 Budget Act, California took a transformational step toward rebuilding our state and local public health workforce and infrastructure that was devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and years of disinvestment. The \$300 million ongoing General Fund investment (\$200 million for local health departments, \$100 million for CDPH), referred to as the Future of Public Health, is a critical investment in our state's public health readiness and response to existing and emerging public health threats.

FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH INVESTMENTS REBUILD OUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Sacramento County Public Health has added over 40 FTEs
- Increased the Deputy Health Officer FTE to increase capacity for the control of communicable diseases and Health Officer coverage.
- Supports the Health and Racial Equity Unit to address health and social disparities.
- Created a Public Health Accreditation Unit to help achieve Public Health Accreditation and sustain Quality Improvement and best practices.
- Increased Epidemiology staffing levels to assist in data collection, analyzation, and response to communicable disease outbreaks.
- Increased Public Health Laboratory capacity to serve increasing county and regional needs.
- Increased nurse staffing in the Communicable Disease Unit to improve response time and capacity for outbreak investigation and follow-up.
- Increased nurse staffing in the Immunization Assistance Program to aid in adequately addressing the decreasing vaccination rates in the county and ability for response in vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.
- Increased staffing in the Sexual Health Promotion Unit and Clinic to improve ability to investigate, link to and provide care to vulnerable populations, ultimately to decrease HIV and STD rates.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

FUTURE OF PUBLIC HEALTH INVESTMENTS REBUILD OUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Increased staffing capacity in the Chest Clinic to help with growing number of TB cases in the county due, in part, to refugee and parolee placement and assist in regionalization of services.
- Created the Community Nursing Unit to provide nursing home visitation to high-risk pregnant and parenting families with children 0-18 years of age and nursing surge capacity for communicable disease outbreaks and public health emergency response.
- Added a second Division Manager to create better administrative span of control over the increased number of SCPH employees and services.
- Many of these positions/units worked together within the funding period on multiple communicable disease and public health responses:
 - The Epidemiology (Epi) Communicable Disease (CD), Immunization, Sexual Health and Laboratory staff worked together to investigate and contain mpox cases.
 - The Epi and CD staff worked to address multi-drug resistant organisms (MDRO) in area facilities including facilitating a MDRO collaborative in partnership with CDPH.
 - The Epi, CD, Immunization and Laboratory staff have followed up on two recent positive measles cases with multi-jurisdictional contacts. The first case had >300 contacts and the second had >200 contacts. This involved identification, investigation, specimen collection and processing, home visitation, patient monitoring and education, vaccination, and medical guidance to area providers.
 - Public Health Laboratory staff responded to a request by the Governor's Office this past week to identify a white powder substance claimed to be anthrax that was delivered to the California Capitol Annex.