

# TULARE COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

## 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

- Supports epidemiologist, deputy health officer, and other support staff who were able to respond to West Nile virus.
- Supports epidemiologist, deputy health officer, communicable disease investigators, laboratory staff, emergency services specialist, and other personnel who promptly mobilized its to investigate a potential foodborne illness outbreak at a local elementary school.
- Supports Communicable disease investigators and nursing staff who were deployed to assist with a Salmonella outbreak investigated- In August 2023, the Tulare County Public Health Department was notified of a Salmonella outbreak involving 39 cases. Additionally, epidemiologists, deputy health officers, laboratory staff, and environmental health staff provided further support, also supported with FoPH.
- Staff funded through FoPH, including the Public Health Emergency Services Specialist, registered nurses, health education staff, public health coordinator, and many others were actively involved for an extended period in responding to the Tulare County Storms of 2023. Their contributions extended beyond immediate emergency response, as they provided vital support to disaster recovery centers established to assist the community for several months.
- Leveraging funding allocated through the Futures of Public Health program, Tulare mounted a comprehensive response to rises in communicable diseases such as Valley Fever and Tuberculosis. This includes deploying a team of communicable disease investigators, laboratory personnel for testing, an epidemiologist for data analysis, and oversight from our Deputy Health Officer. Furthermore, our staff has actively collaborated with local hospitals and health clinics to ensure effective case management and utilize health education specialist to create messaging and social media to inform the public on how to protect themselves and/or seek medical care.

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

- Hired a dedicated full-time PH Lab Director. The Tulare County Public Health Lab has grown to be a robust and highly dependable lab within our region. The lab was counted on as a strong resource during Covid and continues to support the State and other nearby counties. In the past, the department contracted with public health lab directors to cover the minimal requirements in regulations.
- Supports Equity Coordinator (and additional staff) to lead the efforts of the team that canvas our county and provide outreach and engagement efforts to our disadvantaged communities that lack many resources. They contribute to our efforts related to the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan. This team also provide activities that meet several the requirements of the PHAB standards and measures.
- Supports a Quality Assurance Nurse to lead teams that has established strong links and relationships with our congregate settings to work alongside them in infection prevention. The team worked with a Christian camp to advise and educate while experiencing a norovirus outbreak.