



**BARAII**

Bay Area Regional Health  
Inequities Initiative



**Health Equity Innovations  
for Emergency Management**

# Introductions



**Melissa Jones**

Executive Director

**BARHII - Bay Area Regional  
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**Gabriel Kaplan**

Assistant Director

**Sonoma County Department  
of Health Services**



**Salomeh Wagaw**

Program Director of Health Equity

**Riverside University Health  
System - Public Health**

# Equity in the Response to COVID-19:

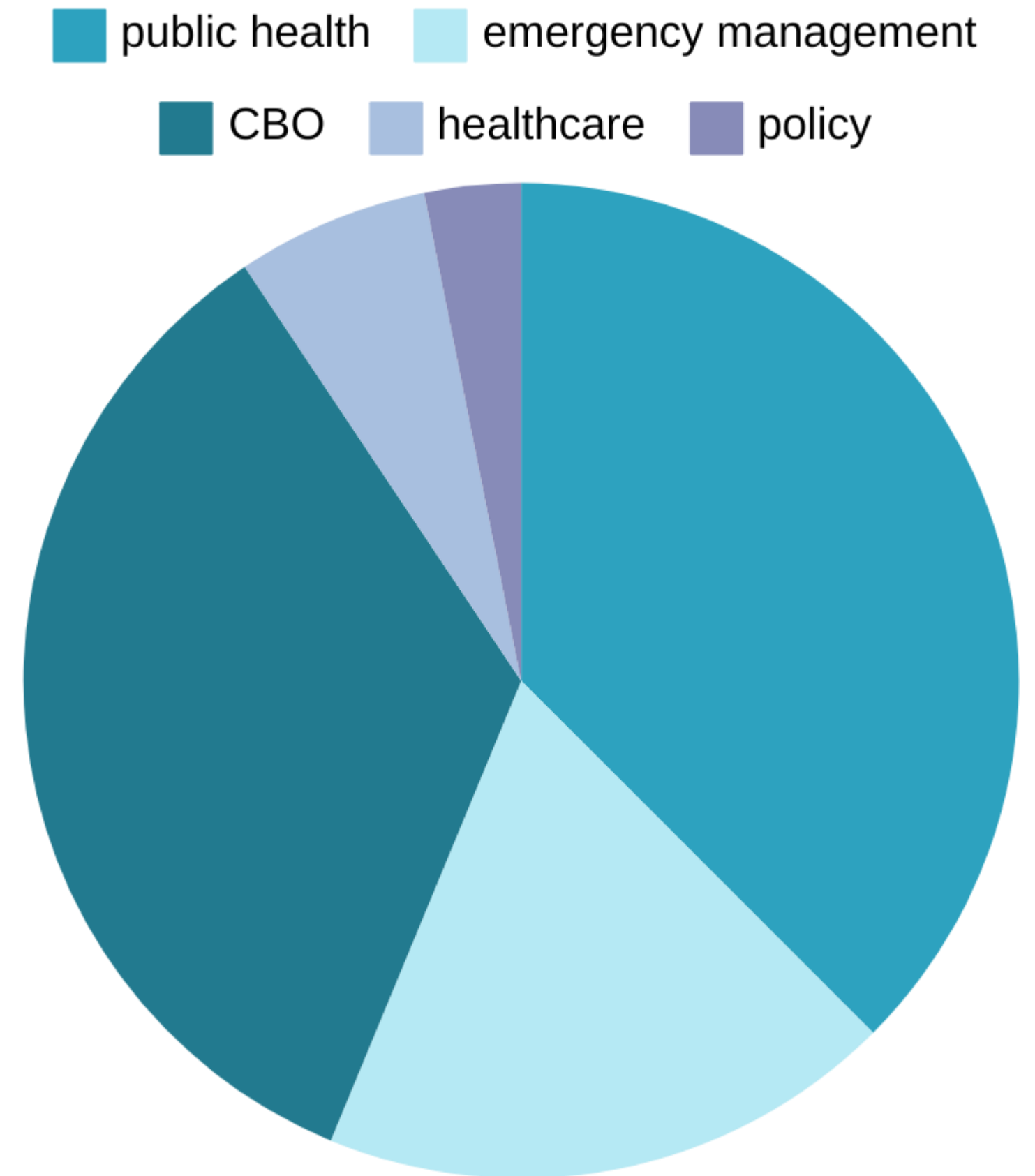
## Successes and Areas of Opportunities for the Bay Area



# Our Process

## Implementation Phase:

- Interviewed 32 key informants across 10 counties in Bay Area, plus statewide purview
- Review of available literature, including materials shared by informants during interviews and meetings



# Key Themes

**Advancing equity through public agency-community organization relationships**

01

**Improving language access in emergencies**

02

**Leveraging political support, policy changes, and technical support to advance equity in emergencies**

03



04

**Sustaining infrastructure built to advance equity**

05

**Addressing challenges of data collection and usage**

06

**Creating space for analysis and healing**

# Sustaining Infrastructure Built to Advance Equity

- Agencies established new positions (equity officers, data analysts, communications managers, AFN coordinators, community engagement coordinators, county-funded COAD managers, etc.)
- Positions moving from ARPA-funded positions to general funds. Other positions being shared across agency program funding (e.g., .5 FTE from Program A, .5 FTE from Equity Division)

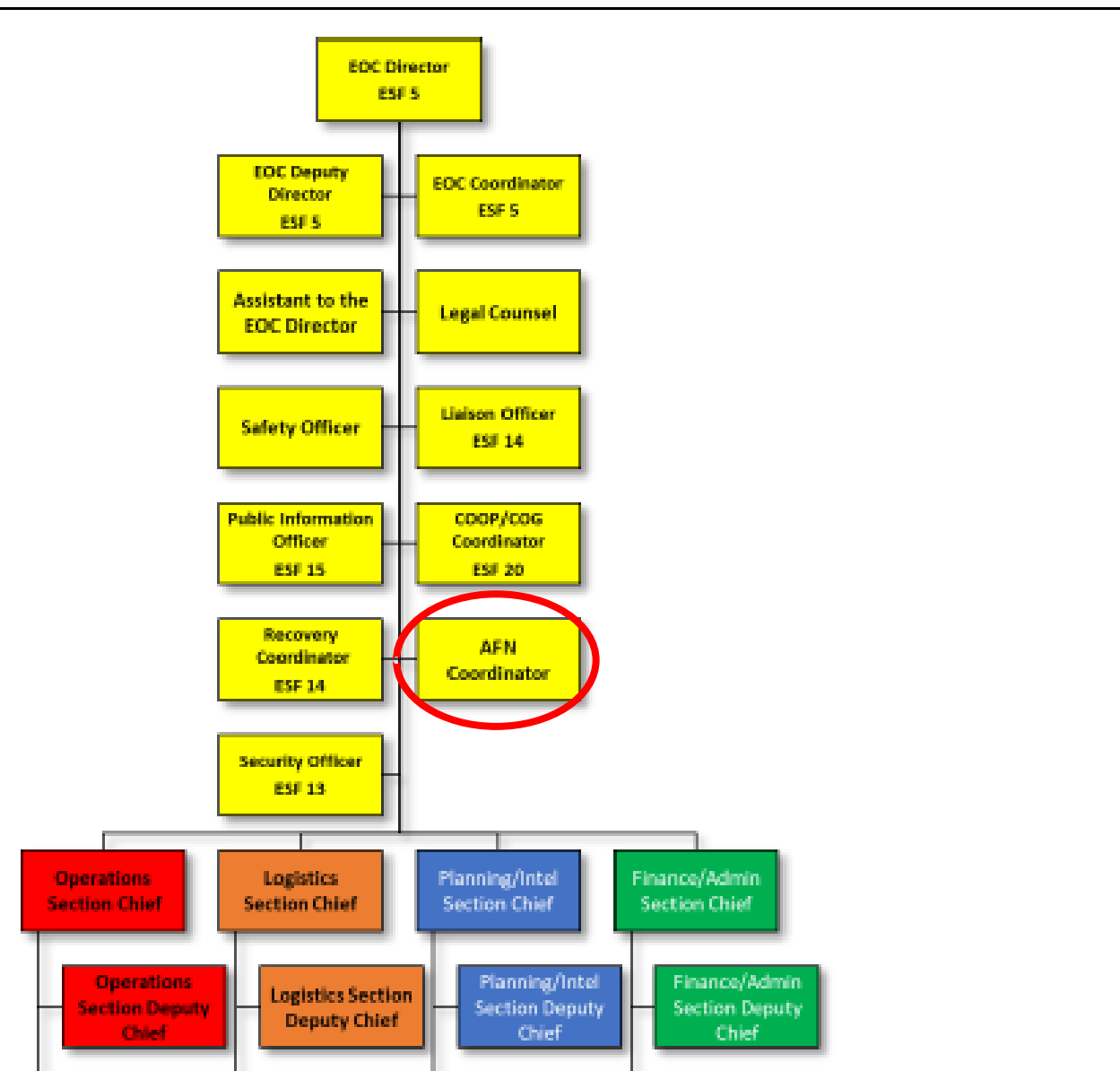


# Models & Areas of Opportunity



## ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### Organizational Structure – Emergency Operations Center.



## Examples from Interviews:

- Creation of Equity Officers in public health and county government agencies
- Santa Clara County added an AFN coordinator position within their EOC organizational structure
- Sonoma County approved using emergency funding for their county's VOAD director position; the VOAD director is present and in decisionmaking meetings within the EOC.

# Practitioner Perspectives

“

“Just because I'm in the room doesn't mean it always goes the way I want it to go. But I provide a voice, I provide a perspective, I provide subject matter expertise.

My job is to ensure that [my executive] is making the most informed decision possible. And in that room, I'm representing all individuals with access and functional needs.

And while it doesn't break the way we want to all the time, I can tell you it breaks in our direction more often than it does not.”

*-Emergency Manager*

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**Thank You!**