

IMPERIAL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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 decades of disinvestment. The \$276 million ongoing General Fund investment (roughly \$188 million for local health departments, \$98 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 protect local communities from existing and emerging public health threats.

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

Workforce Capacity

- Hired an Epidemiologist I to coordinate detection, identification, reporting, and control of diseases border communities; conducted and analyzed epidemiological investigations for disease surveillance; and compiled, analyzed, and reported community health status outcomes.
- Hired two Environmental Health Services Division staff members; an Environmental Health Compliance Specialist II and an Office Supervisor. These positions conducted inspections, resolved environmental non-compliance issues, investigated public complaints, and ensured compliance with environmental regulations to protect public health and safety. Staff also maintained detailed records and provided technical assistance to businesses, agencies, and the public on various environmental health issues. These staff resources are critical in strengthening the department's ability to maintain operational efficiency and uphold environmental health standards.

Workforce Development

- Finalized the Workforce Development Plan to enhance workforce standards and professional development pathways.
- Delivered extensive staff training in Systems Thinking, Communication Skills, Project Management, Lean Methodologies, and Performance Management and Quality Improvement (PMQI) competencies.
- Expanded nursing internships and launched public health skill-building events in partnership with San Diego State University (SDSU).
- Hosted 18 SDSU DrPH candidates representing regional, statewide, and national public health agencies and organizations. Engaged over 1,000 students through countywide career fairs to help grow the public health workforce pipeline.

Organizational Capacity

- Standardized data infrastructure and adopted project management practices to improve dashboards, reporting, and cross-program planning.
- Strengthened community health improvement plan (CHIP) priority area workgroups to advance community health assessment (CHA)/CHIP strategies.
- Started the development of a heat-related illness dashboard to enhance real-time surveillance and public reporting capabilities.

Communications

- Hosted the Regional Health Equity convening in Imperial County and delivered equity-focused communications training to staff.
- Received statewide recognition for the department's Health Equity Hub, language access initiatives, and equity training systems.
- Completed language access deliverables and conducted the Language Justice Spectrum Tool Pilot to inform the language access implementation plan.
- Established an internal communications workgroup to coordinate messaging and guide implementation of the department's communications plan.
- Developed new social media templates, crisis communication tools, and accessibility-enhanced public information materials.