

KINGS 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

- FoPH funds added new positions across a variety of core public health service areas, including but not limited to business application specialists, a program manager, an epidemiologist, program specialists, infection prevention and disease investigation nurse, and fiscal staff.
- This funding supported a bilingual infection prevention and disease investigation public health nurse who was instrumental in the county's efforts to mitigate the impact of H5N1 on county residents.
- This nurse position also functioned as the school nurse liaison and has partnered with local schools to improve infection prevention practices through education and collaboration. The nurse provided important infection prevention guidance and support to other community partners, including local tribes and organizations, to prevent the spread of communicable disease.
- Business application specialists have enhanced data collection capabilities to inform timely public health actions and interventions in the county. These positions have been vital to optimizing the department's information systems.

- ▶▶▶ The program manager supported by FoPH funding has established additional capacities related to public health emergency preparedness, data collection and analysis, and disease investigation. This position supervised the department's epidemiology and data team which conducted timely reports regarding communicable disease threats in the county. The position has enabled the county to bring infectious disease prevention training to frontline health care workers at long-term care facilities in the county.
- ▶▶▶ FoPH additionally funded a fiscal specialist that supported the department's environmental health services division. This position has strengthened department billing and administrative functions, as well as supported the transition to a new platform for licenses and fees associated with environmental health matters in the county.
- ▶▶▶ FoPH funding has supported the hiring of an additional program specialist tasked with supporting the department's workforce development efforts. This position was instrumental in leading workforce initiatives, advancing training, and onboarding new employees to public health.
- ▶▶▶ FoPH supported departmentwide training on diversity, equity, and inclusion, including an equity assessment of the department and tailored support to meet the unique needs of staff.
- ▶▶▶ FoPH funds were additionally allocated to a partnership with community organizations to implement a smart referral network (SRN) to ensure residents with complex health and social needs received comprehensive and coordinated care and supports in the county.
- ▶▶▶ FoPH funds provided the department with an opportunity to hire an epidemiologist position, the first epidemiologist that Kings County has ever had within its department. The position has been critical as the department moves forward with the implementation of the Community Health Improvement Plan and assists with data-informed decisionmaking.