

VENTURA COUNTY HEALTH CARE 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 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

- ▶▶▶ Allowed the Communicable Disease Program to launch a multi-faceted initiative to combat transmission of infectious diseases and elevate infection prevention and control practices in medical and non-medical settings.
- ▶▶▶ Developed the public health response collaborative, which included the Immunization Program, Communicable Disease Program, Health Education, and the Emergency Medical Services/Emergency Preparedness Office.
 - The collaborative provides flu and Tdap vaccines in vulnerable communities.
 - Provided personnel that focus on logistical support and preparedness/response activities for the Public Health Department. This staff helps to coordinate readiness and response as well as equipment and supplies during PH emergencies as well as training and exercises.
- ▶▶▶ Funded the Public Health Laboratory (PH Lab) to add three full-time employees, allowing the PH Lab to provide timely and critical services to the community. PH Lab expanded testing services and participated in new testing methodologies, including gastrointestinal multiplex PCR tests – increasing capacity to test outbreaks and complete CDC-recommended HIV and Hepatitis C testing algorithms in-house and a new methodology for tuberculosis testing reducing turnaround times to next-day services.

- ▶▶▶ Supported the County's mpox testing, treatment, and outbreak management, including immunization efforts to county residents.
- ▶▶▶ Developed an extensive COVID After Action Report and Improvement Plan, which helped implement staff training and ensure the department has a better prepared and response-ready team.
- ▶▶▶ Dedicated personnel to facilitate several continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities, develop a Performance Management and Quality Improvement Plan, and create a SharePoint site focused on performance improvement and CQI efforts.
- ▶▶▶ Funded a data coordinator position to provide enhanced public health data collaboration and analysis capabilities. This has enhanced our ability to analyze current PH threats, and better prepare for future public health threats.
- ▶▶▶ Increased the efficiency of department operations by having dedicated personnel to review encounters with patients without coverage, ensure all financial assignments have been properly entered, and process refunds.
- ▶▶▶ Allowed our IT department to update hardware infrastructure, which ensured business continuity during emergencies and flexibility to set up workspaces out in the community. With the added support, two new cost-effective platforms were successfully integrated into our operations.
- ▶▶▶ Appointed a Workforce Development Manager to address the workforce recruitment and development needs across our department.
- ▶▶▶ Funded a Grants and Contracts Manager to track and oversee 51 program grants, ensuring compliance and proper administration and accounting. Implemented a digital file storage system to align with required records retention policies.
- ▶▶▶ Implemented a part-time facilities manager position for the Public Health Department, allowing streamlined coordination and oversight of the various VCPH sites.
- ▶▶▶ Climate and Health Equity Workplan created by FoPH-funded staff. Workplan will provide content and guidance for integrating climate and health equity into Public Health, both policies and practices. More importantly, it will help guide PH collaboration with other county departments and community-based organizations working in this space.