



Public Health

Health Realignment (State)

Issue: Health Realignment is not keeping up with county population growth

Action: Support or sponsor legislation that ensures sufficient resources for counties to meet their obligations

Background: Realignment of health funding in 1991 aimed to provide a steady stream of growth by funding it through sales tax and vehicle license fees, two revenue sources that usually have annual growth. However, growth in health and mental health realignment is, in fact, not occurring to any significant degree, and is not keeping up with either inflation or population. Due to the realignment formulas, Riverside County is receiving almost the same amount of funding now as in 2003, despite significant increases in population, and in sales tax and VLF. The system is not working as intended.

Further, a significant change to Health Realignment occurred in 2013. As a result of this legislation (AB 85), funds are diverted from Health Realignment to CalWORKS. With this new legislation, uncertainty exists whether the amount of Health Realignment funds retained by counties will be sufficient to meet its obligations.

Health Screening for H-1B Visa Applicants - (Federal)

Issue: There is a lack of health screening for H-1B work visa applicants, and their families, some of which are already in the United States. This presents a potential health risk due to communicable diseases.

Action: Support legislation that requires that individuals entering the U.S. on H-1B visas from countries that are endemic for TB and other diseases of public health significance have health screening by overseas panel physicians. The health screening should be completed by civil surgeons for individuals already in the United States. The cost of the screening should be covered by the sponsoring employer.

Background: It is estimated that immigration reform will increase the number of H-1B work visas from the current 65,000 to approximately 180,000 annually. These individuals come from countries with high prevalence of TB and drug resistant TB. Screening of the applicants and their families for TB and other communicable diseases of public health significance is an important prevention strategy to reduce potential disease transmission and ensure appropriate treatment and follow-up of infected individuals.

Transportation Funding for Complete Streets - (Federal)

Issue: Complete Streets are designed to be used by everyone: cars, buses, bicyclists and walkers. Complete Streets help create better/healthier communities for people to live, play, work and shop. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Action: Support state and federal funding for Complete Streets which encourages transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

Background: Often, we do not consider pedestrians or bicyclists when we build our streets making walking or bicycling challenging. Complete streets allow walkers and bicyclists to be active users of roads.

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Funding - (State and Federal)

Issue: Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization

Action: Support Child Nutrition & WIC Reauthorization to provide full funding which is adequate to maintain current and anticipated Women Infant & Children (WIC) participation levels and assure adequate Nutrition Services and Administration (NSA) funding to maintain clinic costs, education and cost of living increases should the economic recovery take longer than anticipated. Child Nutrition also includes SNAP education for families.

Background: The Inland Empire continues to suffer from the economic recovery in which families utilize these programs to ensure access to healthy and nutritious foods where they live, play and learn. Since fiscal years 2006, more families in Riverside County have turned to WIC. These circumstances have forced WIC to utilize contingency funds to assure that mothers and young children were not turned away. WIC urges Congress and the Administration to carefully monitor WIC participation, food cost inflation, and Nutrition Services Administration (NSA). Funding to assure that the budget request responds to economic conditions. Child nutrition and WIC programs strive to combat childhood obesity and chronic disease prevention and has been part of the President's budget proposals to Eat Healthier, Live Better, and end poverty.

Community Economic Opportunity Act of 2015 - (Federal)

Issue: Community Services Block Grant Act revision and reauthorization through FY 2023 was introduced as H.R. 1655 on 03/26/2015.

Action: Support Community Economic Opportunity Act of 2015 to provide full funding which is adequate to maintain current and anticipated Community Services Block Grant activities and continue to support public eligible entities through adoption of amendment language of legislation which supports public Community Action Agencies.

Background: Community Action Partnership of Riverside County is Riverside County's designated anti-poverty agency, established in 1979, a public agency and a division of the County of Riverside, Department of Public Health. Community Action Partnership is a member of a national network of 1,100 community action agencies (CAAs) created through the 1964 War on Poverty legislation to end poverty. Community Action Partnership is guided by federal regulations and national standards, policies and best practices.

Community Action Partnership receives funding from public and private sources. Its primary funding source is the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) that is funded through the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and administered through the State of California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD).

The agency has embraced the national community action promise that "Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other."

Results from Community Action Partnership's 2015 community needs assessment and community dialogues indicate that there was not a significant change from the 2013 ranking of challenges faced by low-income residents. Riverside County is still facing issues that affect its current economic conditions. Of the 2,292,507 population in Riverside County, 20% of the residents have no high school diploma; 10.3% of residents are unemployed; 8.86% are veterans; 16.2% of the people live below poverty and over 3,000 adults and children are homeless. Approximately one (1) out of every six (6) Riverside County residents lives in poverty.