



Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative

Alameda County | City of Berkeley | Contra Costa County | Marin County | Napa County | City and County of San Francisco | San Mateo County | Santa Clara County | Santa Cruz County | Solano County | Sonoma County

The 4 Rs of COVID-19 Recovery

Health Equity. Economic Opportunity. Racial Justice.

An Equitable Recovery for the Bay Area

Some have referred to COVID-19 as the great equalizer because viruses don't discriminate. But while viruses don't discriminate, people and policies can and do. In the few short months that COVID has disrupted our nation, more people have died from COVID than have died in the Vietnam, Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq Wars; the S&P 500 plummeted from an all-time high; thousands of businesses have closed; and unemployment—particularly among low income workers—has skyrocketed to a level not seen since the Great Depression.

The cost of this outbreak has been disproportionately borne by communities of color. Black and brown workers make up the majority of essential personnel, and are more likely to be locked into expensive, unstable housing thanks to exclusionary rental and lending practices. This has left a significant percentage of the country unable to shelter in place, forced to continue working and risking infection and transmission lest their landlords evict them for missing rent. Unhoused Americans and imprisoned people, who are also disproportionately people of color, are likewise unable to self-quarantine, and are further deprived of access to sanitation, family, and resources as the rest of society shuts down.

This dare not become, and should not be, the future's new normal. Now, more than ever, public health must rise together to leverage their present power to correct the injustices of the past, and create a future that is equitable and just.

What is A Rolling Recovery?

Public health professionals have warned that the COVID-19 Pandemic and the accompanying financial strains of a recession will require an agile response. COVID-19 response and recovery are occurring simultaneously. This plan is designed to use early warning indications from its core team, BARHII and Rise Together members, and real time data to adjust our recovery strategy. The charts below highlight pivot points of change in the recovery process that we are anticipating to ensure needs responsiveness over the next 18-24 months. Equity needs to happen in the decision-making process, not just the outcomes.

Core Team

BARHII has invited a core team of partners to serve as the "Early warning system" of needs related to recovery and to identify leverage points to advance platform priorities. If you are interested in joining this core team, please contact Melissa Jones at mjones@barhii.org.

Require Basic Health Protections for Workers – Summer 2020

COVID-19 represents a new threat to workers, and early data demonstrates that essential employees who worked during the shut down are facing higher rates of COVID-19. To protect workers and prevent spikes in disease, workers need more extension health protections while on the job and programs that ensure they can stay home when sick.

Goals	Current Efforts	Results
<p>Health Care for All</p> <p>Goal: All Californians, regardless of origin or ethnicity, receive coverage and care free of bias</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State expands health care protections for undocumented seniors 	
<p>Sick leave and family care protections</p> <p>Goal: All Californians have the right to stay home when sick or providing care for sick family members, whether full time, part time, or gig worker, without losing income or employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State level job protection for people taking family care leave, and expanded paid sick leave Counties adopt strong emergency and permanent paid sick leave policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued joint letter of support with PHASC Hosted webinar on expanded county powers Commissioned report on LHO power
<p>Enforcement of physical health protections for front-line workers</p> <p>Goal: All workers have access to the protective gear and procedures they need to remain safe and healthy, especially ones working in heavily-impacted industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create regulatory environment that rewards protective employers and punishes negligent ones Secure most effective protections for post-COVID period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Work from home</i> <i>PPE</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified priority sectors with data and policy committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Manufacturing</i> <i>Agriculture</i> <i>Hospitality</i>
<p>Robust public health infrastructure for pandemic and disaster response</p> <p>Goal: All communities receive equitable emergency response, and are involved in all stages of emergency response from planning to recovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EOCs have an Equity Officer that is involved in all phases of response State budget for LHDs expands for health equity and climate resilience activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EOCs in three counties include Equity Officers in planning Hosted 3 meetings on integrating Equity Officers into EOCs Hosted training session with TURN on addressing co-occurring disasters Collection and utilization of robust health disparity data

Rebuild Financial Stability for Families, Small Businesses, and Social Enterprises – Summer 2020

The success of main street and of family financial stability is inextricably linked. Small businesses and families have been squeezed by high rent and living costs that have made it hard to get ahead and impossible to save—even before COVID-19. We must rebuild main street and family finances to build wealth and survive the next disaster.

Goals	Action Items	Status
<p>Universal Wealth Equity</p> <p>Goal: Communities of color maintain wealth and resist asset stripping during the pandemic and recession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct cash aid to families regardless of income or immigration status • Expanded food assistance through cash or food banks • Increased grants and loans for small businesses, social enterprises, worker collectives, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Basic or Guaranteed Income pilots launching in San Francisco, Alameda, and Santa Clara • Hosted a county convening on cash assistance access for undocumented Californians • Researching feasibility using general assistance funds for undocumented Californians
<p>Short Term Housing Stability</p> <p>Goal: Tenants, homeowners and small businesses are not evicted or saddled with debt during the COVID-19 outbreak</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend and expand local moratoria • Pass foreclosure/anti-speculation protections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of Bay Area counties have passed emergency eviction moratoria • Published opeds in multiple counties • Issued brief on eviction moratoria • Created real-time data sets on eviction patterns • Provided speaking points for executive leadership • Issued public statements of support from health perspective

Goals	Action Items	Status
<p>Long-term housing affordability and health</p> <p>Goal: All residents are housed in stable, affordable, and safe housing, and all economies are diverse and primarily locally-owned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant protections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eviction protection ○ Universal rent control ○ Right to counsel • Housing preservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shifting affordable housing from private market to permanent affordability ○ Upgrading or maintaining existing affordable housing • Affordable production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Affordable housing available to all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide anti-rent gouging law passed in 2019 • Hosted reporter roundtable on long-term housing solutions with local and national media coverage in NYT, WSJ, East Bay Times, East Palo Alto News • Land Trusts in Oakland and Vallejo working to secure properties to prevent speculation • Statewide tenant protections on the ballot for 2020
<p>Full and livable employment in the Bay Area</p> <p>Goal: Every worker returns to a job that covers the Bay Area cost of living and provides for their needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to Return campaign • Landscape our regional role in state processes • Inclusive workforce development and entrepreneurship programs 	
<p>Sustain CBOs that serve health equity communities</p> <p>Goal: All communities retain their organizational infrastructure during the pandemic and recovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and structural support for small CBOs (<500k annual budget) • Strategic support for POC-led CBOs, particularly in counties with the most need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed PPP information to network

Reconnect Communities and Protect Mental Wellness – Autumn 2020

Staying at home has reminded us about what’s really important. We miss our neighbors, our colleagues, our friends. Social isolation has been increasing for years—and so have the impacts of daily and chronic stress on mental health. Mental health surges are expected. Now is the time to create a community mental health system that works for all.

Plank	Action Items	Status
<p>Mental Health and Family Wellbeing for All</p> <p>Goal: All communities are safe and supported during the crisis and recovery, and as happy as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address ACEs and community healing, including new increases in family violence • Increased funding for both clinical and community mental health • Effective programs designed for health equity communities experiencing isolation in pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued brief on equitable ACEs usage with First 5 partners • Serving on CalQuic committee for evaluation of ACEs screenings • Identifying leverage points with the Mental Health Services Act for scale
<p>Create opportunities for connection and mutual support among public health and COVID response workers</p> <p>Goal: Public health officers and staff are affirmed and supported against backlash over necessary public health restrictions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collegial and emotional support for BARHII and RT membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brokered meeting between health collaboratives in Northern and Southern California and at the national level to discuss backlash against public health workers
<p>Maintain equitable access to safe public spaces</p> <p>Goal: All communities have access to safe public spaces for mental wellness, recreation, and exercise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spaces opened to communities • People of color living in areas underserved by parks departments retain access to public space • Streets closed to allow for social distancing in neighborhoods without parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay Area parks have reopened following convening from BARHII about balancing transmission risk and equity • Published a brief about parks access • Conducted interview with NPR about need for outdoor space • Hosted webinar for more than 400 parks department staff
<p>Increased internet and virtual access</p> <p>Goal: All residents maintain access to friends, family, school, work, and healthcare through online connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to virtual connection, learning, and public participation opportunities • Close digital divide through state and local policies and resources • All government meetings held online to ensure access 	

Revolutionize the Status Quo To Protect People of Color

We've shown the Bay Area can move quickly to protect health in a crisis. We also know that chronic stress related to economic and racial oppression, our housing and justice systems have had negative impacts on health and life expectancy that predate COVID-19. Now, African American, Pacific Islander, Native American and Latinx communities are being hospitalized and dying at higher rates from COVID-19. It's time to treat the housing, homelessness, and mass incarceration system crises with the same urgency to reset decades of lost life that have been known to us for years.

Nota bene: This portion of the 4R platform is different than the other 3; it is intentionally much bolder and future-thinking. Many of these issues are ones that public health has been grappling with, but has not found consensus. To fully realize our goal, we must reach beyond our membership to develop policies, strategies, and programs on the level of the **Great Society** reforms of the Civil Rights Movement or the **New Deal** package of depression-era workers. We have applied for a national grant from SPARCC to fund our thinking in this area, in partnership with Mile High Connects out of Denver.

1. Expand access to full participation in our democracy (authentic public engagement, virtual meeting access, expanded voting access) and enable full participation for undocumented citizens
2. Refocus Justice System on health, including restorative justice, health protections for incarcerated people, fines and fees elimination, and equitable "decarceration"
3. End income and wealth inequality by restoring wealth stolen from communities of color during previous recessions and recoveries
4. Transform our housing system to prioritize health and end houselessness
5. Create a health care system that ensures full access and culturally responsive care with equitable outcomes (PEI, COVID-19)
6. Take urgent action on climate change to reduce air pollution, fire, and high heat risks and ensure emergency systems prioritize those most vulnerable
7. Just and fair immigration reform

Status

- Convened public health leaders and staff to discuss the health impacts of police violence
- Convening a press roundtable for black CBO leaders on July 8