



LOS ANGELES COUNTY



2021

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

# ABOUT LOS ANGELES COUNTY



LOS ANGELES COUNTY HAS THE LARGEST POPULATION OF ANY COUNTY IN THE NATION - WITH **OVER 10 MILLION RESIDENTS, WHO ACCOUNT FOR 27 PERCENT OF CALIFORNIA'S POPULATION.**



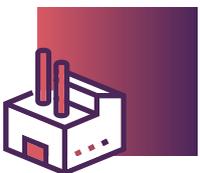
MORE THAN ONE MILLION RESIDENTS LIVE IN **APPROXIMATELY 141 UNINCORPORATED AREAS**, WHOSE MUNICIPAL SERVICES ARE PROVIDED BY THE COUNTY.



THE OTHER 9.3 MILLION RESIDENTS LIVE IN **88 CITIES** WITHIN THE COUNTY, LOCATED THROUGHOUT 4,084-SQUARE-MILES.



A DIVERSE COUNTY, WITH **MORE THAN 140 CULTURES** AND AS MANY AS 224 LANGUAGES.



HOME TO THE LARGEST PORT COMPLEX IN THE NATION, A THRIVING AEROSPACE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SECTOR, THE ENTERTAINMENT CAPITOL OF THE U.S., AND IS **THE NATION'S LARGEST MANUFACTURING CENTER.**

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored patterned shirt, smiling and looking towards the left. The background is slightly blurred, showing another person's head and shoulders. The image has a warm, reddish-pink tint.

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S STATE PRIORITIES

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors oversee a comprehensive government structure that provides vital public services, including health and human services, public safety, fire protection, and essential infrastructure services to 88 cities and approximately 141 unincorporated communities.

The County is proactively engaged in enhancing the physical, social, and economic well-being of its residents through fundamental safety-net services, as well as proactive local programs, including those geared at combating homelessness, reforming the adult and youth justice systems, protecting the environment, among others. State investments in the County's broad services and programs help to maximize efficiencies and cost savings in programs that aid the most vulnerable populations. Investing in the County's residents and physical infrastructure results in greater social and economic gains throughout the State.

In order to continue improving the lives of its residents and the economic vitality of the region, the County of Los Angeles needs on-going legislative and funding support from the Administration, State Legislature, and agency partners. Key priorities for the County of Los Angeles at the State level include:

- COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Health Programs
- Housing and Homelessness
- Justice Reform
- Environment and Sustainability
- Child Welfare and Early Childhood Development
- Economic and Workforce Development
- Infrastructure Investment



# COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY

The County urges the State to support initiatives that provide critical healthcare funding and budget stability for counties experiencing revenue losses as a result of COVID-19.

The County supports State Budget proposals that help counties provide support to individuals, families, and employers, including funding for counties to be used towards:

- Essential activities including for vaccine distribution, testing capacity, contact tracing, personal protective equipment, support for skilled nursing facilities, and management data systems;
- Public safety including implementation of social distancing guidelines in public facilities;
- Servicing vulnerable populations including homeless individuals, at-risk youth and aging adults;
- Behavioral and mental health services;
- Assistance such as financial aid and mortgage/rent relief to individuals and small businesses and landlords;
- Human services including increased caseloads; and
- Funding to local school districts to help students with remote learning and to bridge the digital divide.

The County also urges the State to support initiatives that help counties recover from the direct and indirect economic effects of COVID-19. The County supports State budget proposals that stabilize both 1991 and 2011 Realignment funding for critical safety-net programs, including:

- Fully backfilling for lost Realignment revenue on an ongoing basis until such revenue recovers to pre-COVID-19 base levels; and
- Preserving and augmenting State funding for core safety net programs, entitlements and other critical programs.



The County received **\$239.3 million in one-time realignment revenue backfill**. This **will help to partially offset the \$935.0 million in revenue the County is projecting to lose due to COVID-19**. The County is using the \$1.22 billion it received in Federal CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds to invest in emergency response, diagnostic testing, contact tracing, personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, medical sheltering and recuperative care, rent relief, food distribution, child care, small business grants, teleworking options, and vote by mail preparation, among others.



# HEALTH PROGRAMS

The County urges the State to support proposals that protect and expand the health care safety net and improve the outcomes of vulnerable residents.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed long-standing health disparities that threaten the health of disadvantaged communities across California. In addition to addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic directly, it is critical that we stabilize and strengthen the safety net for the most vulnerable residents to ensure a healthier Los Angeles County. Medi-Cal is essential for the County's most vulnerable residents, and the State's fiscal pressures have led to threats of cuts to eligibility, covered services, and access to care. Additionally, a robust public health infrastructure is essential to not only prevent and respond to health emergencies, but also to address root causes of health conditions. Finally, the growing need of individuals with serious mental illness and substance use disorder continues to outpace resources for critical services at all levels of care.

The County encourages the Legislature and the Administration to support proposals that:

- Protect and expand Medi-Cal funding, eligibility, and covered services, including through the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative, and promote access to available health care services for immigrant families and children;
- Strengthen the public health infrastructure for programs that enhance health equity across the County, as well as effectively respond to health emergencies, emerging threats, and other disasters;
- Support community health, disease prevention and control, and wellness efforts to address the root causes of physical and behavioral health conditions; and
- Ensure that individuals with mental illness have access to critical services in the most appropriate setting, including maintaining Mental Health Services Act funding for the behavioral health system and expanding funding for behavioral health services and placements/housing.

The County's **Department of Health Services** annually cares for approximately **750,000 patients** annually and is the **second largest municipal health system in the nation**, with four hospitals and 25 health centers.

The **Department of Public Health** operates **39 programs and 14 public health centers** with the support of **over 4,000 public health professionals**. The Department oversees disease control, environmental health, and community and family health programs countywide.

The **Department of Mental Health** is the largest county-operated mental health department in the country, treating more than **250,000 County residents** annually through **85 directly operated sites**, approximately **300 co-located sites**, and contracts with over **1,000 organizations and individual practitioners**.





# HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

The County urges the State to support initiatives that address the housing and social service needs of homeless individuals and families, provide housing and legal assistance to those at-risk of homelessness, and incentivize the creation and preservation of affordable housing. Additional affordable housing is needed to address the skyrocketing rents, unjust evictions, and severe lack of current affordable housing units which has resulted in 547,030 severely rent-burdened households in Los Angeles County. To increase affordable housing across the State, the County encourages the Legislature and the Administration to support proposals that:

- Provide funding to construct new affordable housing units;
- Preserve and rehabilitate existing affordable housing units;
- Provide rental assistance and legal assistance to those at-risk of housing instability or homelessness, especially emergency assistance needed due to the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Provide down payment assistance to first-time homebuyers; and
- Fund initiatives to ensure housing stability of youth, including those currently and formerly in foster care.

Also, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis have exacerbated the region's homelessness crisis. To address the homelessness crisis, the County encourages the Legislature and the Administration to support proposals that:

- Provide ongoing funding to reduce and prevent homelessness;
- Expand the availability of interim, permanent supportive and affordable housing; and
- Allow counties to maximize Federal, State, and local funds to provide services to individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness, such as for Medicaid reimbursable services.



Since April 2020, with the launch of **Project Room Key** (PRK), Los Angeles County and its partners entered into lease agreements with **38 motels and hotels** countywide which **have served as interim housing for 7,905 distinct people experiencing homelessness** (PEH) who are especially vulnerable to hospitalization and death if they contract COVID-19. These motels and hotels have been critical to enabling these at-risk PEH to live safely during the pandemic and avoid illness, which has in turn protected our healthcare system to the benefit of all Los Angeles County residents.

# JUSTICE REFORM

The County urges the State to support efforts that advance statewide justice reform as well as local efforts such as the County's work to find alternatives to incarceration and to transform the juvenile justice system.

The County's ongoing reform of its justice programs continues to be at a critical stage, and its success will have momentous impact locally and statewide. In March 2020, the Board of Supervisors created the Los Angeles County Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Unit, as part of reform efforts recommended by the County's ATI Work Group formed in February 2019. The ATI unit has begun the initial steps of putting into place the strategies recommended by the Work Group's "Care First, Jail Last" report. The ATI unit will work closely with County justice, health, and social services departments, including the County's Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) to continue implementing services and reforms by which to create a more effective and human-focused justice system. ATI is also leading the County's juvenile reform efforts, which will follow the "Youth Justice Reimagined" recommendations of the County's Youth Justice Work Group.

Justice Reform will require a robust, multi-disciplinary and intersectoral effort, including a continued and expanded partnership with the State. The County encourages the Legislature and the Administration to advance proposals that would support the County's goals to:

- Divert adults and juveniles from incarceration and into rehabilitative, health-focused, and care-first systems;
- Mitigate racial and economic disparities in the justice system;
- Strengthen law enforcement transparency, accountability, and policing reforms; and
- Implement bail system reforms consistent with the County's care-first agenda, with adequate local control, time, flexibility and funding for services, and which reduce unnecessary detention while maintaining public safety.



**Over five years, the County's Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) has successfully diverted 6,006 individuals away from jail** and into community services. ODR's jail and community-based diversion programs serve to reduce the number of inmates in the Los Angeles County jail who suffer from mental and/or substance use disorders by removing them from the jail through various court interventions or through pre-arrest or pre-booking diversion and providing them with care and housing.

# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

The County urges the State to invest in proposals that mitigate historic and ongoing exposure to environmental risks, especially from the production and use of fossil fuels; and bolster local authority to enforce corrective actions of businesses emitting hazardous substances, increase the State's regulation of hazardous materials and waste, improve the State's enforcement of environmental laws, reduce the use of fossil fuels, and provide funding for remediation or administration of service provision.

Environmental hazards compounded by the impacts of climate change continue to place an unequal burden on low-income communities, particularly communities of color. Over the last several years, incidents involving lead contamination, hazardous substance releases, hazardous air quality, and deteriorating water supply infrastructure have required the County to intervene to ensure that the State is providing timely enforcement of regulations and holding responsible parties accountable for cleanup actions.

To advance statewide and local environmental goals, the County also supports proposals that:

- Enhance the well-being of every community while reducing the damage to the natural environment;
- Reduce the production and use of fossil fuels in order to limit residents' exposure to climate-related risks and assist communities in adapting to climate change;
- Prioritize complimentary goals of job creation, protection of natural resources, improved public health, social equity, technology innovation, and regional policy collaboration; and
- Provide counties with funding for environmental mitigation.



The **Clean Power Alliance**, a community choice aggregator created by the County of Los Angeles in 2017 and formed through a joint powers agreement **made up of 32 public agencies** across Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, **is now providing 100 percent renewable energy to over one million residents in 12 cities** in Los Angeles and Ventura counties.

# CHILD WELFARE & EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The County urges the State to invest in proposals that strengthen and support families; promote the safety, permanence, health, and well-being of all children; and enable vulnerable youth to transition to self-sufficiency and adulthood.

The County supports proposals that enhance child safety, well-being, and permanency, and strengthen families by ensuring access to services and programs that include, among others:

- High-quality early care and education;
- Comprehensive child abuse and neglect prevention services;
- Enhanced child welfare and permanency services;
- Services and funding for case management, mental health, educational attainment, career development and housing programs that promote self-sufficiency among transition-age foster youth, nonminor dependents, and former foster youth; and
- Additional investments and resources to address the increased need for services resulting from the ongoing pandemic and provide relief for strained systems.

In addition, the County will advocate for State and Federal assistance and proposals that advance the County's efforts to successfully implement child welfare reform, including the Family First Prevention Services Act, without disruption to vital services.



In 2019, over **80,000 child abuse referrals** were generated in Los Angeles County, involving almost **155,000 children**. As the nation's largest public child welfare and adoption agency, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services provides monthly child welfare services to approximately **38,000 children** ages birth to 21 years, of which nearly 18,000 reside out-of-home with 51% placed with relatives.



# ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The County urges the State to enact proposals that promote economic development, stimulate job growth in the region, and help lift economically disadvantaged residents experiencing barriers to employment out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

Locally, the County is strategically investing in supporting small businesses and innovative workforce development programs in high growth sector industries that create a pipeline to well-paying jobs for the community. In order to advance these efforts, the County supports proposals which:

- Provide economic relief to industries, small businesses, and individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Support and incentivize the growth and development of small businesses and social enterprises; and
- Stimulate regional investment and encourage private sector participation.

## INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

The County urges the State to enact proposals that support county and State responsibility for improving and maintaining vital public infrastructure. The County supports proposals that:

- Provide new and ongoing sources of funding to enhance mobility and safety;
- Provide funding to maintain and upgrade water infrastructure;
- Fund the development of public infrastructure, transportation systems, and programs that address population growth, the regional economy, climate change, and public health;
- Provide funding to invest in recycling and organic waste infrastructure;
- Assist local governments' disaster prevention/mitigation efforts; and
- Increase digital infrastructure.

The County has a vision for modernizing infrastructure while ensuring efficient resource management in the context of climate change and population growth, and has approximately \$1.6 billion in shovel-ready projects for transportation, water, parks, and beaches. Full funding for these projects could create over 20,000 jobs.



In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the County's economic and workforce development programs facilitated virtual hiring events resulting in over **14,000 individuals hired** in both permanent and temporary jobs; worked with businesses and unions to **connect over 4,000 people to good paying jobs**; and partnered with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation to assist small businesses avert over 1,300 layoffs.



# BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' LOCAL PRIORITIES



## **CHILD PROTECTION**

Enhanced well-being and success for systems-involved youth

[dcfs.lacounty.gov](https://dcfs.lacounty.gov)



## **HOMELESSNESS**

Coordination of community-based services and housing resources

[homeless.lacounty.gov](https://homeless.lacounty.gov)



## **INTEGRATED HEALTH**

Streamlined access to integrated health care

[healthagency.lacounty.gov](https://healthagency.lacounty.gov)



## **JUSTICE REFORM**

Alternatives to incarceration and reduced involvement with the justice system for vulnerable adult and youth populations

[ceo.lacounty.gov/justice-reform](https://ceo.lacounty.gov/justice-reform)

[ceo.lacounty.gov/ati](https://ceo.lacounty.gov/ati)



## **SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING OVERSIGHT**

Monitoring for a cleaner and healthier environment

[publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](https://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh)



## **IMMIGRATION**

Immigrant protection and advancement

[oia.lacounty.gov](https://oia.lacounty.gov)



## **ANTI-RACISM, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY**

An anti-racist Los Angeles County policy agenda

[ceo.lacounty.gov/antiracism](https://ceo.lacounty.gov/antiracism)

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