2018 Policy Platform: Priority Areas

Public Health’s Institutional Responsibilities to Promote Health and Health Equity

“Within the public health system, Governmental health agencies have a legal and constitutional responsibility for protecting the health of the public...To do so requires a three-pronged approach:

- developing appropriate social and public policies;
- developing community-based prevention activities; and
- assuring the delivery of comprehensive and high-quality personal preventive services.

The social and public policies will need to ensure adequate food and shelter, clean air and water, and protection from workplace hazards...

The public health agency is responsible for the following essential health services:

- collecting and analyzing health status and utilization information;
- developing policies and policy recommendations to maintain and protect the public’s health by building upon the data and its analysis and responding to community values;
- informing the public and policy makers of its analysis and recommendations;
- working to develop consensus on needed action; and making sure that necessary public health and personal health services are provided to all.”


ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The Public Health Alliance of Southern California (Alliance) is a coalition of local health departments in Southern California. Collectively our members have statutory responsible for the health of 50% of California’s population. Our vision is “All Southern California communities are healthy, vibrant and sustainable places to live, work and play.” The Alliance builds healthy, equitable communities through upstream multi-sector policy, systems and environmental change; and mobilizes and amplifies the Southern California local health departments’ regional voice in three Priority Initiatives: Healthy Neighborhoods: Transportation, Land Use & Public Safety; Healthy Food & Water Systems; and Data in Action. The Alliance work is grounded in two overarching frameworks including: 1) Equity and Opportunities for All and 2) Healthy Planet, Healthy People.
The Policy Platform Language statements are grouped around the Alliance priority initiatives and overarching framework categories, with sections devoted to each. A sixth section includes policies supporting overall Public Health and Prevention Infrastructure. This platform was approved by a vote of the Leadership Council in November 2017.

**Overarching Policy Priority Areas**

- **Healthy Neighborhoods: Transportation, Land Use, and Public Safety**
  - Support transportation and land use policies and programs that protect and improve health and equity
  - Support policies and programs that protect public safety

- **Healthy Food and Water Systems**
  - Promote sustainable, secure and resilient food and water systems

- **Data in Action**
  - Promote increased data access and use in support of communities facing health inequities

- **Equity and Opportunities for All**
  - Increase resources, policies and data to support communities facing health inequities

- **Healthy Planet, Healthy People**
  - Support health and equity across climate policies and programs

- **Public Health and Prevention Infrastructure**
  - Support a Health in All Policies approach to advance healthy communities
  - Support enhanced coordination between public health and healthcare
  - Increase and enhance funding for prevention and public health infrastructure
Detailed Policy Priority Areas by Category

Healthy Neighbors

Support transportation and land use policies and programs that protect and improve health and equity

- Promote safe active transportation and transit
- Advance health equity in transportation funding
- Support health data and equity in transportation modeling
- Support reductions in vehicle miles traveled
- Support green infrastructure integration into transportation projects
- Support policies that increase access to and funding for parks and greenspace
- Promote health equity within new General Plan Guidelines
- Increase local food access and security into land use and transportation planning
- Support updates to zoning and regulations to facilitate composting of all sizes
- Promote health equity for autonomous vehicles, vehicle sharing and other emerging technologies
- Promote health equity and environmental justice within goods movement plans and policies

Support policies and programs that protect public safety

- Support efforts focused on violence prevention and harm reduction

Healthy Food and Water Systems

Promote sustainable, secure and resilient food and water systems

- Promote food resource utilization and food diversion/donation
- Support for nutrition program funding
- Increase local food access
- Support climate friendly food and water policies, including procurement of imperfect produce and alternative water systems
- Promote food security within health/healthcare assessments, implementation plans, screening and referrals
- Promote water as a basic right
- Support economic incentives for food recovery and community composting
- Support healthy, equitable, fair jobs in the food system
- Support healthy retail food environments, and food marketing
Detailed Policy Priority Areas by Category

**Data in Action**

**Increase data access and use to support communities facing health inequities**

- Promote utilization of the California Healthy Places Index with a focus on policy implementation
- Support increased data collection at more granular levels, and expand accessibility of health-related data within other sectors
- Support work to reduce health inequalities by identifying differences in health outcomes and health behaviors between population groups, with a focus on those historically lacking sufficiently representative data such as small disaggregated racial and ethnic groups and LGBTQ populations
- Promote linkages between health outcomes data and social determinants of health data
- Encourage more data to be captured and used by the public
- Support efforts to communicate information so that it does not perpetuate false narratives

**Equity and Opportunities for All**

**Increase resources, policies, and data to support communities facing health inequities**

- Support prioritization of resources and implementation of health-promoting policies in places facing unhealthy community conditions.
- Support policies and procedures to protect against institutional racism, bias and hate
- Support policies and program adjustments to serve and protect immigrant populations, such as delivery of public benefits
- Promote equity in state funding programs
- Support policies that address affordable housing and homelessness
- Support strategies and policies that promote economic resilience
Detailed Policy Priority Areas by Category

**Healthy Planet, Healthy People**

Support health and equity across climate policies and programs
- Support and strengthen public health’s role and involvement in state-level climate change policies and actions
- Support inclusion of climate resilience within existing health programs
- Support environmental regulations that protect public health and ensure equitable distribution of environmental health benefits and burdens
- Support incorporation of zero waste, carbon farming and local foodshed strategies in climate action plans
- Support enhanced authority of LHDs to mitigate local environmental hazards
- Support LHDs in efforts to reduce the burden of health hazards in low-income communities and communities of color

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**Public Health and Prevention Infrastructure**

Support a Health in All Policies approach to advance healthy communities
- Promote adoption and utilization of an Health in All Policies approach when partnering with other sectors
- Promote adoption and utilization of an Health in All Policies approach for internal operational practice

Support enhanced coordination between public health and healthcare
- Support coordinated planning, financing and implementation strategies within the Communities Lifting Communities (CLC) initiative and other settings, with a focus on these 3 priority areas:
  - Birth Outcomes
  - Diabetes
  - Homelessness

Increase and enhance funding for prevention and public health infrastructure
- Protect current and create new sustainable revenues to support equity and prevention
- Encourage wellness funds and braided funding
- Protect public benefits that support the public’s health
- Support efforts to increase access to health care