



Evolution Series

Twenty years of health equity innovation

Equitable Recovery

The Four R's of COVID-19 Recovery 2020


BARHI
Bay Area Regional Health
Inequities Initiative

BARHII

THE 4 RS OF COVID-19 RECOVERY



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AN EQUITABLE RECOVERY

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-19 has disrupted our nation, more people have died from the pandemic than 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. 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.

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.

WHO IS HARDEST HIT?

“It has been clearly documented that certain communities - low-income, Black, Latino, Pacific Islander, and essential workers – have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in terms of higher rates of infection, hospitalizations, and deaths. These disparities create a public health imperative to address exposure in all communities, including especially those disproportionately impacted, as a measure to protect all communities.” –The California Blue Print for a Safer Economy: Equity Focus

REQUIRE BASIC HEALTH PROTECTIONS FOR WORKERS

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

- Equitable access to COVID-19 testing, treatments, and vaccines** All Californians, regardless of origin, ethnicity, or income, receive care for COVID-19, that is adequate, timely, affordable, and free of bias
- Sick leave and family care protections** All Californians have the right to stay home when sick or caring for a sick family member—whether full time, part time, or gig worker—without losing income or employment
- Enforcement of physical health protections for front-line workers** All workers have access to the personal protective equipment and procedures they need to remain safe and healthy, especially those working in heavily impacted industries
- Robust public health infrastructure for pandemic and disaster response** All communities receive equitable emergency response, and are involved in all stages of emergency response from planning to recovery

Require

REBUILD FINANCIAL STABILITY FOR FAMILIES, SMALL BUSINESSES, AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

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.

Sustained financial resources for families

All families can afford necessities such as food, healthcare, and housing and communities of color do not experience asset stripping during the pandemic and recession

Housing stability and homelessness prevention

All residents have access to stable, affordable, and safe housing, and do not incur substantial housing debt because of the COVID-19 outbreak

Inclusive pathways to quality jobs

Every worker can return to their previous employment in a timely manner and living wage jobs are accessible to all

Small business preservation

Small businesses throughout the region can maintain their operations during the state of emergency



RECONNECT COMMUNITIES AND PROTECT MENTAL WELLNESS

Social isolation has been increasing for years—and so have the impacts of chronic stress on mental wellness. The pandemic has amplified those stressors and added new barriers to connection. Now is the time to reconnect our communities and improve mental health.

Mental health and family well-being

All communities are safe and supported during the crisis and recovery period. Everyone has opportunities for connection and mutual support and quality, culturally relevant mental health services, including approaches to traumatic childhood experiences

Stability for community-based organizations that serve equity communities

All communities retain and expand their infrastructure of non-profit organizations that serve the needs of communities impacted by inequities during the pandemic and recovery period

Equitable online access to government, learning, health, employment, and interpersonal connection

All residents have access to affordable and reliable broadband and have virtual access to local government decision-making processes, school, healthcare, work, and friends and family through online connections

Equitable access to public open spaces

All communities have access to safe public open spaces for mental wellness, recreation, and exercise

Reconnect

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, and inequities in our housing and justice systems have had negative impacts on health and life expectancy that predate COVID-19. We also know that climate change and other environmental disasters disproportionately impact communities of color. Now, Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander communities are being hospitalized and dying at higher rates from COVID-19. It's time to treat the housing, homelessness, mass incarceration, and environmental crises with the same urgency we must bring to the fight against COVID-19 to reset decades of lost life that have been known to us for years.

Ensure full access to democracy

All residents have full and equal access to government planning and decision-making, including authentic public engagement, virtual meeting access, and expanded voting access for all California residents.

Refocus the justice system on health

All people are protected by the justice system, regardless of wealth, race, creed, sex, gender, or immigration status. This includes restorative justice, health protections for incarcerated people, fines and fees elimination, and equitable "decarceration."

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REVOLUTIONIZE THE STATUS QUO TO PROTECT PEOPLE OF COLOR

End income and wealth inequality

All people have enough wealth to meet their needs and live in dignity without wealth-based inequities in access to resources and power. This includes restoring wealth stolen from communities of color during previous recessions and recoveries.

Transform our housing system

Everyone has access to affordable, healthy, high-quality housing. These changes will end houselessness and racial disparities in housing systems.

Create a health care system for all

All people have full access to culturally responsive care with equitable outcomes. This includes expanding health care to all Californians and addressing bias in care within our medical systems.

Community-centered protection from climate change

Urgent action is taken on climate change mitigation and resilience, centered on the communities most impacted by climate change. This includes reducing air pollution, wildfire, and high heat risks and ensure emergency systems prioritize those most vulnerable.

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