



Legislative Policy Platform

This policy platform outlines the Bay Area Public Health Community's policy priorities. The platform was developed to provide a resource for local health departments that are seeking to integrate health promoting policies into their jurisdictions' legislative platform. It also guides BARHII's organizational legislative priorities. This model is based on best practices for population health and health equity that have been established regionally, statewide and nationally to impact the social determinants of health.

Public Health's Institutional Responsibilities To Promote Health and Health Equity

“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.”

Source: The Role of Public Health in Ensuring Healthy Communities, APHA 2014

Primary Policy Areas:

Stable Housing: Advance stable, affordable, and healthy housing opportunities for all in accordance with need, with a focus on low-income individuals and families, particularly those with pregnant people and young children. Support policies that would end homelessness, such as supportive and transitional housing. (See the BARHII Displacement Brief for more information on the connection between housing and health: <http://barhii.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/BARHII-displacement-brief.pdf>)

Equitable Economic Development and Financial Security: Encourage a strong and inclusive local economy that builds household financial security for all, and ensures collective ownership in low-income communities and communities of color. Support community benefits agreements to provide and ensure neighborhood economic benefits and support minimum wages being raised at local, state, and/or national levels to living wages. (See BARHII’s Economic Opportunity Brief <http://barhii.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/10-23-16-BARHII-Economic-Opportunity-Brief-Complete.pdf> and The Minimum Wage and Health http://barhii.org/download/publications/barhii_2014_minimum_wage_health.pdf for more information about the connection between economic opportunity and health.

Climate Change and Environmental Justice: Support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change and support climate justice, including efforts to increase ability for vulnerable communities to respond to climate change and other natural disasters. (See the BARHII Climate Change Quick Guides for more information on the connection between climate change and health: <http://barhii.org/resources/climate-change-quick-guides/>)

Complete Neighborhoods: Support neighborhoods that are complete and make the healthy choice, the easy choice by providing easy and affordable access to public transportation, safe active transportation options, healthy foods, parks and open space, accessible and safe public services, such as libraries and recreational facilities, and thriving small businesses. (See the BARHII SDOH Indicator Guide’s chapters on Access to Public Transportation and Food Access for more information on the health connection between transportation and healthy foods in complete neighborhoods: <http://barhii.org/resources/sdoh-indicator-guide/>. In addition, see the California Integrated Transport and Health Impact Modeling Tool (ITHIM) research on the connection between active transportation and health outcomes: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23409903>)

Human Rights, Democratic Inclusion, and Eliminating Historical Legacy of Discrimination: Support efforts to eliminate racial and other types of discrimination, including affirmative efforts to correct legacy of structural inequalities. Support policies that advance accountability, transparency, participation, and democracy for all. Support legislation that increases access and the capacity of the most impacted residents to participate in policy and procedural decision-making processes. (See the BARHII SDOH Indicator Guide’s chapter on Voter Participation for more information on the connection between civic engagement and health <http://barhii.org/resources/sdoh-indicator-guide/voter-participation/>)

Inclusive and Safe Communities: Promote policies that support an inclusive sense of community where everyone is safe and socially connected. Support policies that reduce our prison population and our dependence on incarceration, while enhancing community safety and the well-being of those who are incarcerated and re-entering society (See the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) Statement of Policy on Mass Incarceration and Racism: <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/16-05-Mass-Incarceration-and-Racism.pdf>; American Public Health Association (APHA) policy statement on Social Practice of Mass Imprisonment: <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy->

[database/2014/07/29/10/00/social-practice-of-mass-imprisonment](https://www.humanimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SR_HIP_rsrchsum_091614-1.pdf); Human Impact Partner’s HIA on Rehabilitating Corrections in California: https://humanimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/SR_HIP_rsrchsum_091614-1.pdf; and the American Public Health Association’s Defining and Implementing a Public Health Response to Drug use and Misuse: <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/08/08/04/defining-and-implementing-a-public-health-response-to-drug-use-and-misuse>).

Immigration: Support legislation that promotes immigrant health, well-being, and family unity; removes barriers to access services and employment; and fosters civic engagement, equal opportunity, and integration for immigrants. (See Human Impact Partner’s HIA on Immigration Reform for more information on the connection to health: <http://www.humanimpact.org/projects/hia-case-stories/family-unity-family-health-an-inquiry-on-federal-immigration-policy/>)

Public Services, Healthcare and Prevention: Support a single-payer national health insurance program to ensure universal access to high quality community-based public services such as culturally and linguistically supportive, accessible, quality mental, physical, and substance use health care and preventative services, regardless of one’s ability to pay, age, gender-identity, health and citizenship status (See the following article for the connection between health outcomes and culturally appropriate care: <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/search-for-guides-reviews-and-reports/?productid=1934&pageaction=displayproduct>)

Emerging Policy Areas:

Childcare, Early Childhood Development, and Family-Supportive Programs: Infancy and early childhood (0-3) are crucial periods for brain development, and children need parental care and quality supervision for healthy development. Yet many Californians cannot afford childcare—forcing families to make trade-offs that can negatively impact children’s development. Local Public Health Departments currently manage family-supportive programs that have been shown to improve maternal and child health outcomes, set up children for lifelong health, and yield savings for public systems. (See: The Raising of America documentary resources, such as Are We Crazy About Our Kids? for more information on the connection between quality and affordable childcare and preschool and the health, social and economic long-term benefits: <http://www.raisingofamerica.org/are-we-crazy-about-our-kids>)

Education: Ensure that all people have a right to fully-funded, high-quality education that creates pathways to better health and career opportunities in school environments that promote healthy eating, active living, and mental health. (See the BARHII educational attainment fact sheets for more on the connection between education and health: http://barhii.org/download/info/barhii_ea_health_fact_sheets.pdf)

Transportation: Increase access to affordable, safe, and reliable public transportation. Support the Vision Zero goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and injuries by utilizing all tools available to improve the

safety of our streets. Support safe, quality environments for walking and biking. (See the BARHII SDOH Indicator Guide's chapter on Access to Public Transportation for related health outcomes <http://barhii.org/resources/sdoh-indicator-guide/> and the California Integrated Transport and Health Impact Modeling Tool (ITHIM) research on the connection between active transportation and health: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23409903>)

Health in All Policies: Increase opportunities to include health implications into cross-sector policies outside the health arena to promote health, equity, and sustainability.

Workforce Diversity: Support legislation and design programs that create intentional pathways for increasing leadership and workforce positions that represent the population diversity by race, culture, gender identity, and sexual orientation.