

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Advocating for
Community Health and
Racial Equity in the
American Rescue Plan



About Us

Led by Public Health Advocates, **California COVID Justice** is a coordinated public health response to the deep-rooted inequities that the pandemic has laid bare.

Leading issues include:

- Racism as a Public Health Crisis
- Inadequate Housing and Homelessness
- Lack of Economic Supports
- Lack of Public Health Infrastructure and Workforce

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This campaign will allow us to build a movement for advancing community-driven policies to mitigate COVID now and other critical issues in the future.

CALIFORNIA COVID JUSTICE:
RECOVERY, RESPONSE & REPAIR



#CACOVIDJUSTICE



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Introduction

This presentation is a tool to help communities advocate for the resources they need to recover from COVID-19. The **American Rescue Plan Act** is sending billions of relief dollars to California's cities and counties.



How To Use This Information

It's important that community members directly impacted by COVID-19 advocate for:

- Community members to be key partners in setting priorities and developing spending plans
- Transparency regarding your city/county spending process and decisions
- Investments in public health programs and infrastructure
- Directing money and resources to those most impacted by COVID-19



What is the American Rescue Plan Act?



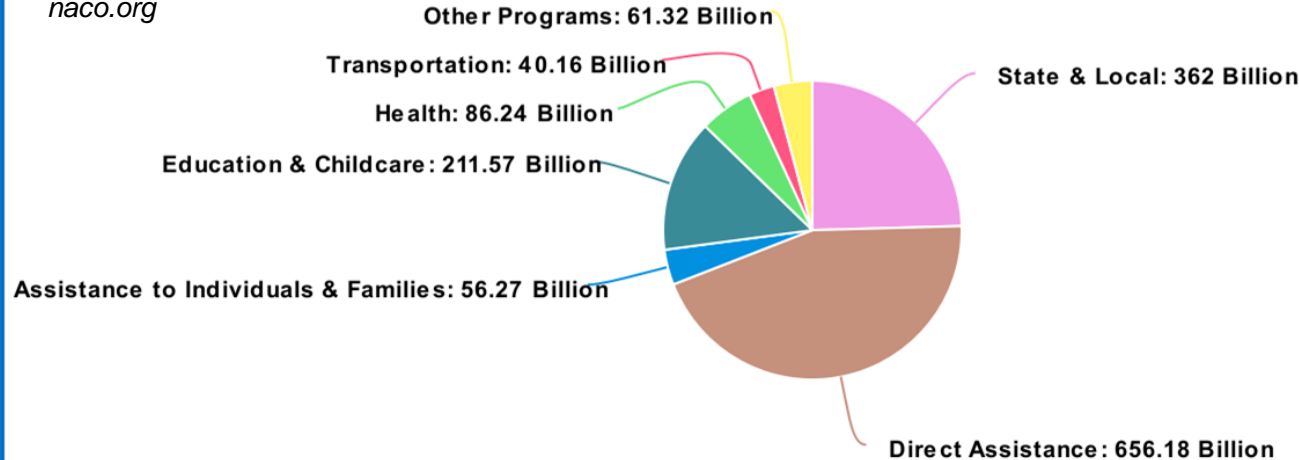
The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 aims to deliver immediate economic help to American families most impacted by COVID-19 (esp. low income, people of color).

Through ARPA, the state of California will receive \$26 billion, and California's cities and counties will receive \$16 billion.

Your voice is needed to make sure this money goes where it is needed most. **Community members and community-based organizations can influence how the money is spent.**

Overview of ARPA Funding

ARPA Funds Nationwide –
naco.org



The **\$362B** in the State & Local Fiscal Recovery Fund includes the **\$16B** for California's cities and counties – the focus of our advocacy tools



How can local \$ be spent?

- ▶ **\$16 billion** in federal aid to California's local governments, including counties and cities, can be spent on:
 - ▶ Responding to the public health emergency of COVID-19 and its economic impacts
 - ▶ Providing government services where there has been a loss in funding
 - ▶ Investing in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure
 - ▶ Assisting essential workers by providing additional pay



How the local funding works

- ▶ A local government can spend the funds on its own programs, or it can transfer funds to a nonprofit or other local community organization for approved projects.



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Community members, community councils and community-based organizations can and should advocate for how these funds are spent.

DID YOU KNOW?

Job loss has disproportionately affected people of color throughout the pandemic, specifically those who identify as Black and Hispanic.

Of the estimated 161,000 unhoused people in California, 40% are Black Americans.

Racism is a public health crisis!



The California COVID Justice coalition recommends using the \$16 billion in local funding towards critical supports such as: economic supports, housing, racial equity and public health infrastructure.



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**Here are some specific
ideas on how you can
spend the money in
your community...**



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Direct economic supports to families & small businesses

- ▶ **Create pilot programs to provide guaranteed income to historically underinvested communities**
 - ▶ Guaranteed income is the idea of providing a set amount of money each month to ease the stresses of poverty that make it harder for people to find work and stay healthy.
 - ▶ Example: Pilot programs in [Stockton](#), [Oakland](#), [San Francisco](#), Los Angeles



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Direct economic supports to families & small businesses

- ▶ **Grant Reparations Programs**
 - ▶ Reparations programs are a **SMALL** way to recognize the historic inequities Black Americans have internalized. Reparations should be in direct forms that underscore racial disparities in health, housing, and entrepreneurship.
 - ▶ Example: [Evanston, Illinois reparations](#)
- ▶ Invest in and support immigrant and small businesses owned and operated by people of color



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Economic Supports: *Questions to Consider*

- ▶ What programs can be put in place or expanded to support small businesses owned and operated by immigrants and people of color in your community?
- ▶ How can guaranteed income programs help to support families in your community?

Housing and Homelessness

- ▶ Invest in permanent supportive housing
- ▶ Create safe organized spaces with wraparound services for unhoused people
- ▶ Fund adequate, affordable housing, and access to income-based housing
- ▶ Cancel or defer rent and mortgages
- ▶ Provide grants for homeownership





Housing Initiatives:

Questions to Consider

- ▶ Who doesn't have housing and who is at risk of being homeless?
- ▶ Is there a housing shortage?
- ▶ What programs can help prevent homelessness?
- ▶ How can your community use ARPA funds to provide shelter for people and families who are homeless?

Racism is a Public Health Crisis



COVID-19 has devastated communities of color. We must invest in their recovery and fund programs to dismantle long-standing health inequities.

[Click here](#) for current data on COVID illness and deaths in California by race and ethnicity.

Invest in Racial Equity



- ▶ Cities and counties can use ARPA funds to reach the low-income communities of color that were hit hardest by COVID-19 and its economic impacts.
- ▶ In California, Prop 209 (*prohibiting state institutions from considering race, ethnicity, or sex in public employment, contracting or education*) can be **incorrectly cited as a barrier** to funding resources and programs for communities of color.
- ▶ The Black Infant Health Program and Oakland Black Business Fund are examples of programs serving Black Californians.

Racial Equity and Economics



Economic solutions can address racial disparities

- ▶ People of color are more likely to be “essential workers” (nurses, agriculture, retail, food industry) and are most at risk for COVID-19
- ▶ Funds can provide hazard pay to essential workers. Raising minimum wages to be liveable wages can reduce poverty rates for people of color.

Strengthen Public Health Infrastructure

Public health infrastructure provides the capacity to prepare for and respond to emergency threats and chronic health challenges.

Local public health jobs never recovered from the 2008 recession, leaving health departments under-resourced.



Strengthen Public Health Infrastructure

- ▶ **ARPA funds can help communities reduce historic inequities and address root causes of disproportionate COVID rates by:**
 - ▶ Strengthening community health programs, collaboratives, mobile health units, Promotora programs, street medicine clinics
 - ▶ Creating or strengthening task forces and community-based communications campaigns for some of the most impacted communities such as undocumented individuals and persons with disabilities
 - ▶ Providing equitable, widespread vaccine distribution
 - ▶ Improving outreach, education, and translation services for non-English speakers

Racial Equity & Public Health Infrastructure:

Questions to Consider

- ▶ What public health needs in your community have not been addressed during the pandemic?
- ▶ What existing programs can be supported with ARPA funding to improve community health?
- ▶ What are some other ways to address racial equity?



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What should the money NOT be spent on?

Law Enforcement

- ▶ ARPA should be used to support communities and individuals who have been devastated by the pandemic.
- ▶ Most of each city budget already goes to law enforcement.
- ▶ The local ARPA funds are intended to address the basic needs of individuals and families.
- ▶ We recommend spending these funds to strengthen public health infrastructure, support families economically and address the housing crisis.



ARPA funding goes to cities AND counties

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES

Links to your community's funding allocations are below.



County of Sacramento: \$303M

City of Sacramento: \$112M

City of Roseville: \$17.3M



County of Fresno: \$195M

City of Fresno: \$166M

City of Clovis: \$17.3M



County of Los Angeles: \$2B

City of Los Angeles: \$1.25B

City of Carson: \$18.3M

[Find your county's allocation](#)

[Find your city's allocation](#)

AMERICAN-RESCUE-PLAN-ACT

A brief timeline



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**This is what
you can do
now...**



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Speak with the decision-makers in your community

- Contact your county board of supervisors, city council and mayor of your city.
- Speak during public comment periods.
- Identify the programs in your community that should be expanded using these funds.
- Organize community groups to turn out.

Demand a community driven process

- Hold public discussions and conduct polls
- Ensure priorities reflect your community needs
- Ask for reports on where the money is going
- Ensure documents are accessible (non-English, large print, clear language)

**What's
coming
next?**



California COVID Justice is creating more advocacy tools for you to use

Go to www.phadvocates.org/ARPA to access the following materials and tools:

- A webinar recording on the ARPA
- This slide deck, which you can present to groups in your network
- Additional advocacy tools, including a model resolution, coming in early July



For more information, visit: www.phadvocates.org

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