

Fresno COVID-19 Equity Project

Contact Tracing and Equitable Resident COVID-19 Support in the County of Fresno: A Community-Based Approach

The Immigrant and Refugee COVID-19 Response Team and the African American COVID-19 Emergency Response have combined their expertise to conduct contact tracing and community outreach as part of the County's COVID-19 response to our most vulnerable populations.

There are **three components**, two currently being reviewed for supplemental funding from the Fresno City Council that sets the foundation to reach these vulnerable populations in a unified manner:

- **Fresno County Testing efforts**, which include mobile testing site events and the use of the state testing centers.
- **The Immigrant and Refugee COVID-19 Response Team** is developing curriculum, adapting it culturally, and training and deploying 70 contact tracers, in addition to conducting coordinated community outreach by 22 community health workers in at least twelve different languages and cultures. In addition, we plan to bring in community-specific organizations to help us with the most impacted rural communities of Selma, Sanger, Mendota/Firebaugh, and Reedley.
- **The African American COVID-19 Emergency Response Team** will provide a comprehensive African American enhancement training curriculum to ensure the workforce has specialized skills to address the unique health and social needs of the African American Community. This team will provide culturally concordant tracing surveillance, social support, healthcare services, and household stabilization through a highly skilled workforce of *existing crisis intervention social workers* and 35 contact tracers and community health workers.

This proposal is aimed at enhancing the County's strategy to reach vulnerable rural areas. This approach works toward mitigating COVID-19 until a vaccine is available while helping people get back to work. The proposal includes a dedicated fund for direct support for residents who test positive to be able to successfully quarantine and limit close contact spread.

The unified partnership will train and work with the Fresno County Department of Public Health, and the CBOs to train **105** Promotoras/Community Health Workers as contact tracers to serve the City and County of Fresno. In addition, we will train **22** community health workers to provide safety net support. This specialized workforce will assist both in contact tracing and community outreach as trusted messengers. They will be trained by each agency through their adapted curriculum adjusted for each language and culture. The CHWs will be working on a one on one basis with members of the community. Many of the people that will be recruited for this workforce have already been providing help on a daily basis to their respective communities through Facebook, WhatsApp, phone texts, churches, and other platforms.

These efforts in the city and the county will serve the foundation for a community approach to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our most vulnerable communities.

- **Outreach through 17 CBOs** in Fresno County to specific vulnerable communities
- **The Heal team conducting COVID-19 tests, co-morbidity identification and immediate medical linkages** in the City of Fresno (approved at \$5 million)
- **Current Fresno County testing efforts**
- Contact tracing and community support by multiple City and County CBOs for a **total of 105 tracers and 22 Community Health Workers over six months**

Additional Fresno County Funding Requested from 17 CBOs: \$4,025,889 (and an additional \$1million dollar fund for county community-specific partners)

We request support from the County to support community education and outreach to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 and to provide resources before and after testing so that there is broad community understanding about the implications of testing and tracing. Through the onboarding of our more rural county-specific partners, we will augment our existing capacity to do contact tracing and community outreach. We have submitted a proposal to the **City of Fresno for a request of \$4,723,379** to supplement the testing efforts within the city. Our proposal to you would allow our county-serving CBO's to do their work where it is most needed and bring on additional county-specific partners to supplement the work being done in the city.

Summary of CBO Work Plan

While Fresno County is expanding testing capacity in the most vulnerable communities, the CBOs will be developing and adapting curriculum development and training community health workers/promotoras as contact tracers, as well as assisting the city and county efforts to connect people to information about COVID-19, safety net resources, and other resources related to the pandemic response.

Curriculum Development and Adaptation

In conjunction with UCSF Fresno, Black Wellness & Prosperity Center, and the Department of Public Health, CVHPI, and Fresno BHC will develop a curriculum for Community Health Workers that includes the Promotora model, Community Health Worker basic principles, contact tracing, and community outreach specific to the COVID-19 response which includes food, shelter, financial assistance, mental health, and immigration resources. This curriculum will be adapted for culture and literacy by FIRM, Cultiva la Salud, Go Public Schools Fresno, Centro Binacional, Jakara Movement, and Black Wellness & Prosperity Center in conjunction with Fresno EOC. CVHPI will also assist in the monitoring of the curriculum and adaptation of breakthrough science as directed by the Department of Public Health and UCSF Fresno. In addition, CVHPI will work with each organization to ensure the fidelity of the curriculum across

population groups. BWPC will work with UCSF to develop a comprehensive data and evaluation plan specific to the needs of the AA community.

Community-Based Personnel

Total Contact Tracers: 105

Community Health Workers will be trained in contact tracing, following Centers for Disease Control guidelines on contact tracing^[1], Association of State and Territorial Health Officials training “Making Contact: A Training for COVID-19 Contact Tracers.”^[2] and guidance by the State of California’s “California Connected” contact tracing program^[3]. The contact tracing will be done working closely with the Fresno DPH and UCSF Fresno. FIRM, CVHPI, and BWPC will ensure that the contact tracing program meets the requirements of Fresno DPH. Contact tracers/Community Health Workers will include staff from at least 16 different organizations. In addition to the Immigrant, Refugee, and African American teams, The Fresno Center, Reading and Beyond, and Centro La Familia Advocacy Services will also be included. The fund for additional county-specific community-based organizations will bring in additional contact tracing personnel.

Total CHWs: 23

In addition to contact tracing, organizations will provide specialized outreach to their target populations about the following topics:

- What is COVID-19 & How does it spread?
- How to prevent COVID-19?
- What to do if you need to be tested?
- Communications to public relayed by DPH on a weekly basis
- County Mobile Testing Sites, State Testing Sites, Other Testing Events
- Navigation of other resources related to COVID-19 response: food, shelter, financial assistance, mental health, domestic violence, and immigration resources
- Specific to the African American community, small business COVID-19 surveillance, and tracing will occur, through the Metro Black Chamber of Commerce

CHWs will provide much of this information on a one-on-one basis, sometimes related to their contact tracing work. The partner organizations will also have program directors & program specialists that will oversee the CHWs and provide broader communications on the latest developments related to the aforementioned topics. Executive Directors and Directors will continue to meet through the Immigrant and Refugee COVID-19 Response Team and leverage

resources to provide a permanent workforce pathway for the CHW teams. In addition, FIRM will coordinate with UCSF and all partners to support testing outreach efforts.

BWPC will work with the AA Coalition to coordinate and develop an AA testing plan with UCSF. The AA COVID-19 Coalition will continue to work in partnership to ensure a sustainable AA CHW workforce. BWPC will continue existing work with Fresno City College to develop AA maternal child health workforce pathways who are cross-trained as CHWs.

Non-Personnel Operating Costs

Communications

FIRM, Fresno BHC, CBDIO, Cultiva la Salud, and Jakara Movement, and CVHPI will all be generating communications content and disseminating in the various language/culture appropriate media outlets that each of the organizations have established relationships with, in addition to using their social media platforms to reach targeted audiences. FIRM will coordinate meetings and conferences related to the work that results from this work. The radio media outlets include KBIF900, Punjabi Radio, Radio Bilingue. The communications will also include TV media, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. CVHPI will also coordinate county and regional efforts on communications to the Spanish and Indigenous farmworker communities.

BWPC has developed a comprehensive communications plan in coordination with the AA coalition, which will be disseminated through various platforms, including print, radio, TV, and SM platforms. Communications and content imagery will be reflective of the AA community and based on an existing and currently conducted needs assessment.

Program Operating Costs

The program leadership in order to provide the best possible work virtual setting we will need to provide equipment to our community-based contact tracers. This will include technology equipment, technical support, and space to do work if a home/remote work office is not feasible. In addition, we will be referring to legal counsel when there is a question as to how to hire Promotoras/CHW workers who may have a resident status other than permanent residents or U.S. citizens. Many of the most effective Promotoras in the city of Fresno serving South Fresno currently have a status other than those two categories.

Indirect for CBOs @ 10-15%

The indirect for CBO's is for contract management within each organization in order to process invoices, provide all reporting Fresno BHC may need for their grant requirements from the City of Fresno, and do the human resources work for the onboarding of all contact tracing and promotora staff. CBO's vary in their requirements for this indirect. The Immigrant and Refugee Team will all be requesting 15%, since they will be responsible for their own contracts with Fresno BHC, and Fresno EOC will be the lead responsible for all of the African American Response Team partners, thus will be asking for 10% indirect

Total Budget (County): \$4,025,889

Communities Served by Current CBO Collaborative

Geography Breakdown of Partners	GO Public Schools	Cultiva La Salud	FIRM	Jakara	CBDIO	Reading & Beyond	CLFA	TFC	Fresno EOC	Total # of Agencies per Area
West Fresno (County)	X		X				X		X	4
Selma	X	X		X	X					4
Sanger	X	X	X	X				X		5
Mendota	X						X			2
Reedley		X								1
Parlier		X								1
Clovis		X	X	X				X		4
Orange Cove		X			X					2
Kerman				X	X		x			3
Kingsburg		X								1
Huron					X					1
Coalinga										0

Geography Breakdown of Partners	GO Public Schools	Cultiva La Salud	FIRM	Jakara	CBDIO	Reading & Beyond	CLFA	TFC	Fresno EOC	Total # of Agencies per Area
Caruthers				X	X					2
San Joaquin				X						1
Firebaugh							X			1
Fowler	X	X		X						3
Riverdale										0
Del Rey						X				1
Laton										0
Biola						X	X			1
Tranquility										0
Raisin City					X					1

[1] <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/keyinfo.html>

[2] <https://learn.astho.org/p/ContactTracer>

[3] <https://covid19.ca.gov/contact-tracing/>

COVID-19 Response Capacity as a Coalition

Each of the aforementioned organizations has conducted numerous efforts in relation to COVID-19 within their respective communities and have been meeting weekly on the Refugee/Immigrant Team call and the weekly AA COVID-19 call as a part of the Network of Networks. Some of the partners (FIRM, CVHPI, GO, Cultiva, Fresno BHC) submitted a \$100,000 proposal to Opportunity Challenge to train Spanish, Hmong and Arabic speakers as promotoras/CHWs. We knew that \$100,000 was not enough funding, but was an opportunity to pilot and build pipelines to meaningful work in local institutions, based on the strengths of immigrant and refugee communities! This unified proposal is an opportunity to iterate, improve and strengthen the structure and strengths of the submitted proposal by including more CBO partners and being more explicit in our geographic coverage. If awarded, the announcement will occur in September 2020. This team is also part of broader networks, such as Fresno DRIVE, The Children's Movement, Cradle to Career, and the network coordinating the Fresno County COVID-19 Agency Call, all of which have shown support for the work of this team.

Other current COVID-19 response work includes:

1. **FIRM's** Community Health Workers - Hmong, Lao, Arabic, Khmer have been providing regular updates on ethnic Radio and TV shows, as well as YouTube videos and social media. Staff continue to provide resources and information as they work from home and hold multiple food doorstep dropoff distributions with culturally-congruent produce and staples for elders and vulnerable families.
2. **CVHPI** and **GO Public Schools Fresno** have an ongoing weekly Spanish COVID-19 resources call since April 2020. This call is both on zoom and Facebook to reach targeted audiences, and has included a weekly update by the Fresno DPH. These calls have also brought State, regional, and local officials and experts to discuss topics such as the Governor's immigrant fund (DRAI), other local and state funds, low-cost basic utilities services, schools, and special topics relevant to the community like the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA).
3. **Fresno BHC** is part of the core coordinating group of the Fresno County COVID-19 Weekly Agency-CBO Call, which brings together officials, community based organizations, and other resources to local CBOs and the broader community on a weekly basis. These calls are sponsored by the Central Valley Community Foundation. In addition, Fresno BHC is providing timely information via weekly contact (phone calls) to residents in south Fresno and connecting them to resources via referrals and direct assistance (primarily in neighborhoods south of Belmont).
4. **Cultiva La Salud** has been responding to COVID19 by directly targeting and supporting elderly Latina immigrants who face many vulnerabilities. Their efforts include assessing the needs of elderly Latina immigrants, bringing them essential food and home products, and following up with them on a regular basis to ensure they are also being connected to other available resources.

5. **GO Fresno- Leaders Brigade** program based on the promotora model, and focused on placing trusted messengers to reach parents of children in public schools. In addition to the weekly Spanish COVID-19 calls, the brigadiers have been in constant contact with parents, helping them navigate applying to the different funds available and connecting them to COVID-19 related resources.
6. **The Jakara Movement** has provided direct financial and food assistance, especially produce and staples, to low-income Punjabi families and other neighbors, especially in West Fresno and Fresno County. In addition, they have conducted outreach about the latest on COVID-19 and other resources vis-a-vis Punjabi radio, WhatsApp, Punjabi television, and other networks.
7. **CBDIO** has been conducting outreach through audio recordings in indigenous languages, in fields and in neighborhoods where the Indigenous Community lives. Further messaging outreach is in the planning phases in conjunction with UCSF Fresno, Fresno DPH, Fresno State, and CVHPI.
8. **AA Clergy** Task Force launched a unified virtual service delivery plan, including coordinated reopening plans for continuity of social and emotional support and to ensure AA compliance with mass gatherings. Congregate compliance support is critical in the AA community; AA represents 60% of community spread. In addition, the AA Clergy Task Force has redeployed the church buses to get food and critical supplies to elderly AA residents.
9. **BWPC** partnered with United Way Fresno Madera County to launch a targeted rapid response COVID-19 text campaign, which reached 70,000 residents, developed COVID-19 women's health education for Community Regional Medical Center and Ob/gyn providers, and launched an AA education campaign within the Fresno GROWS Best Babies Zone, and worked with the AA coalition to launch the first two AA focused COVID-19 drive through testing.
10. **Cultural Brokers, Inc.** is providing frontline COVID-19 crisis support to prevent child abuse and neglect with a team of trained social workers who have specialized skills and education to address the unique needs of COVID-19 impacted families. In addition, CBI is supporting AA families with food, housing and utility stabilization resources.
11. **Fresno EOC** operates numerous programs and partnered with AA coalition members and beyond to ensure critical services during the pandemic, such as meal delivery, diapers, shelter, and food programs reach vulnerable populations, including migrant, rural, AA, elderly, and pregnant residents. Fresno EOC is serving as a critical capacity and infrastructure backbone to the AA Coalition.
12. **Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce (FMBCC)** is leading efforts with the Black business community as it relates to COVID-19. FMBCC established a small COVID-19 Relief Fund for AA college students displaced from campus jobs. FMBCC will redeploy and add staff for AA community and small business testing and tracing and surveillance and assist with studio productions for the communications plan. They will work closely with HeaL to provide small business surveillance testing.
13. **West Fresno Family Resource Center** has a long standing history with the African-American population as a resource for assistance and is providing supplies, food, case management and other critical support services in response to the pandemic. WFFRC

has done extensive COVID-19 related needs assessments on behalf of the coalition, and served as a pilot COVID-19 testing site.

14. **The Fresno Center** has been added to the group. It has a long history of working with the Southeast Asian refugee and immigrant population and is now a neighborhood resource in Southeast Fresno for both Latinx and Southeast Asian populations. It has assisted families with food and resources throughout the pandemic.
15. **Reading and Beyond** has served children and families for decades, helping them prepare for the workforce, with tutoring, and neighborhood promotoras to meet with families to educate and assist with family needs. It has deployed staff to assist United Way of Fresno/Madera Counties with 2-1-1.
16. **Centro La Familia Advocacy Services** is a trusted CBO in Fresno County that has over 45 years of experience in serving Latinx families with emphasis on immigrants, farmworkers and monolingual Spanish. It operates three Neighborhood Resource Centers in West Fresno, Highway City and Kerman and utilizes the promotora model for its service delivery; working to link clients to services they cannot easily access due to challenges and barriers such as transportation, stigma, discrimination and language.
17. **Take a Stand** is a trusted frontline violence prevention organization. County-wide domestic abuse calls have risen 70% since the pandemic and there has been increased violence and crisis within the AA community. They will provide specialized tracing and support efforts among families experiencing violence in the home.