



COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Recovery Plan (2022 Update)

www.marincounty.org/ARPA

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Period covered: July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

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General Overview

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The historic \$1.9 trillion federal relief program, known as the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, brought much needed financial resources to millions of Americans and businesses to generate a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery from the pandemic. That relief program included \$65 billion to support counties and cities across the nation through the [State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds](#) (SLFRF).

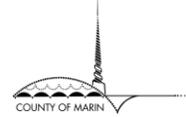
As part of SLFRF, the County of Marin received \$50.2 million, funds which must be expended by the end of 2024. It is important to note that SLFRF is just one of a number of stimulus funding programs under ARPA, and the County does receive separate ARPA funding for other specific County programs unrelated to SLFRF.

During the [FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-24 budget processes](#), the Board of Supervisors identified the following priority spending areas for the County's \$50.2 million in federal stimulus funding:

- Racial equity initiatives
- Climate change and sea level rise projects
- Homelessness services and permanent supportive housing (including City and Town partnerships)
- Revitalization of Golden Gate Village in Marin City
- Public health and mental health services, including ongoing COVID-response
- Southern Marin Health and Human Services hub
- Fire Department facility improvements
- Childcare and early education initiatives
- Enhanced funding for non-profit partners
- Economic impacts, including specifically for West Marin
- Broadband improvements and expansion

The County's focus in each of the priority areas outlined above will be to target support in areas where the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated racial, health, economic, social and education inequities. It is important to note that not only will racial equity be a standalone spending area (as listed above) but will be a key element of all identified spending areas. For instance, sea level rise and a lack of permanent supportive housing disproportionately affects Marin County's low-income residents, and residents of color. The County's [Racial Equity Action Plan](#) continues to guide the County's work in advancing racial equity in all aspects of County operations.

Final guidance on how local governments may use these funds was published in the US Department of the Treasury [Final Rule \[31 CFR Part 35\]](#), issued in November 2021 and finalized in January 2022. The Final Rule outlined an expansive list of acceptable uses including revenue replacement, enhanced county staffing and reimbursements for a wide range of public health response costs. Consistent with these guidelines, the County has already incurred response costs in excess of the \$50.2 million award and has submitted eligible General Fund expenditures to qualify for full reimbursement. Accordingly, the \$50.2 million in relief funding



received from the Treasury can be repurposed for uses consistent with the Board’s adopted expenditure plans.

The County will make direct use of SLFRF funds received to 1) support the costs of the County’s extensive and ongoing pandemic emergency response and economic recovery efforts; 2) support rehiring and stabilization of the County workforce for essential services; and 3) claim allowable revenue replacement as outlined in the Treasury [Final Rule \[31 CFR Part 35\]](#).

By targeting these three areas as directly funded projected under the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund program, the County was enabled to utilize available proceeds of local funds to support to Board-directed spending priority areas listed.

MARIN’S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

As the pandemic continues through the second half of 2022, the County of Marin continues to devote considerable staffing resources in public safety departments as well as public health to support not only direct medical and testing needs but also ongoing inoculation and education efforts. Current numbers indicate 90.8% of Marin County’s total population is vaccinated.

In providing direct medical and emergency response services to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the County will continue to direct public health resources to areas which have been most adversely impacted from the health and negative economic implications of the pandemic. Several regions within Marin County that are both among the most racially diverse, as well as low to extremely low-income, have experienced disproportionately high cases of COVID-19 and disproportionately low vaccine access and inoculation.

By partnering with organizations that directly serve these regions and devoting County staff to these efforts, the County has been able to successfully address these inequities by establishing testing and vaccine sites directly in the neighborhoods affected and implementing targeted rental assistance and income replacement programs.

County public health staff will continue to work with our community partners to engage low-income and racially diverse residents in identifying the most pressing public health and economic recovery needs within our underserved communities. At the same time, COVID-19 response, mitigation and recovery will continue to be a dynamic situation and we expect priorities within those communities to evolve over time

DIRECT USE OF FUNDS

The County Administrator’s Budget Office has analyzed the Final Rule guidance issued by the U.S. Department of the Treasury and identified three projects which will make **direct** use of the \$50.2 million in SLFRF funds (listed below). Note: all required federal reporting to the U.S. Treasury on the use of the County’s federal SLFRF funds received will be for these 3 projects.

County of Marin directly funded Projects	SLFRF Funds allocated
1: Public Health Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic	\$32,649,752
2: Public Sector Workforce Capacity	\$7,624,164
3: Revenue Replacement	\$10,000,000
Total	\$50,273,916

INDIRECT USE OF FUNDS

The Board of Supervisors identified priority spending areas listed will make indirect use of the stimulus funds:

- Racial equity initiatives
- Climate change and sea level rise projects
- Homelessness services and permanent supportive housing (including City and Town partnerships)
- Revitalization of Golden Gate Village in Marin City
- Public health and mental health services, including ongoing COVID-response
- Southern Marin Health and Human Services hub
- Fire Department facility improvements
- Childcare and early education initiatives
- Enhanced funding for non-profit partners
- Economic impacts, including specifically for West Marin
- Broadband improvements and expansion

Projects within these priority-spending areas will be supported by the proceeds of local funds that result from the County applying all direct SLFRF funds to: Public Health Response, Public Sector Workforce Capacity, and Revenue Replacement.

As the Board of Supervisors approves projects within the priority spending areas, they will be added to www.marincounty.org/ARPA as indirect beneficiaries of the County's receipt of SLFRF funding.

PROMOTING EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

While Marin's statistics as a whole may reflect both a wealthy and healthy community, there exist vast income and social inequities across regions in Marin. In the 2021 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps report, Marin County was ranked No. 1 in health factors and health outcomes among California's 58 counties for the 11th time in 12 years. However, the same report acknowledged that Marin has one of the lowest scores in income inequality and housing affordability. The racial disparities in health in Marin are also significant. For instance, Black residents are 2.4 times more likely to experience premature death in Marin than White residents, and while 22% of Marin's Hispanic children are in poverty, only 2% of White children are.

The disparity has extended to COVID-19 infections. The latest County data shows that while Latinx residents comprise 16% of the County's population, they have accounted for 49% of total COVID-19 infections. Marin's White residents however, accounting for 71% of the County's population, have accounted for only 37% of cases countywide.

The pandemic job losses and subsequent economic recovery has also not been equitable in Marin. The negative economic impacts of the virus have disproportionately impacted low-income, non-White communities in Marin County. The first six months of the virus saw a sharp 45% decline in jobs in the lower-wage sectors such as tourism, travel, leisure and hospitality. While most of the service sector jobs lost had returned by mid-2021, many low-wage earners in

those sectors lost real income and skill growth opportunities over an extended period of time during which they were unable to work. While documented residents were mostly able to successfully access unemployment benefits; undocumented residents, which comprise an estimated 15,000 or 6% of Marin's population, were unable to claim any federal or continuous unemployment benefits during the pandemic.

To date, the County's two-pronged approach to supporting economic recovery for low-income residents has been to both ramp up eligibility office operations and to create direct financial payment to individuals in economic hardship. The Human Services Divisions of the Health and Human Services Department including Employment Services and Benefit Offices have added staffing and expanded hours to assist more residents in claiming benefits they are eligible for including unemployment, disability, housing vouchers and SNAP food stamps. The County also developed and implemented an Emergency Rental Assistance Program to assist both low-income residents and landlords, and utility agencies with grants to provide direct payment of unpaid rent and/or utilities from April 2020-December 2021.

The County is aware that beyond the health and employment implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, low-income children in Marin are at a much greater risk of falling behind academically due to the nearly 18 months of remote instruction. Part of Marin's economic recovery from the pandemic has included implementing programs to support students with limited at-home schooling support and/or internet access.

A major project that the County undertook during the pandemic was the installation of a neighborhood-wide, free Wi-Fi network in the very low-income and predominately Hispanic Canal neighborhood. Prior to the installation of the free Wi-Fi network, nearly half (44%) of Canal residents reported difficulties connecting to the internet. This made remote learning exceedingly difficult if not impossible for the 3,400 school-age children living within the 0.1 square mile Canal neighborhood.

Additionally, the Marin County Free Library undertook several major pandemic remote initiatives to support low-income students. The predominately low-income-serving Marin City library branch distributed free Wi-Fi network hot-spots and Chromebooks to students while students at the local elementary school and organized both English and Spanish book give-away events at the South Novato Library, which serves a large Spanish-speaking population. To directly support the County's front-line staff during the pandemic including first responders and essential workers, Library employees staffed childcare and learning centers for children who were otherwise unable to get childcare while schools remained closed.

Finally, a major focus of the County's equity focus in its COVID response to date has been addressing the increase in individuals experiencing homelessness in Marin. African American and Latinx people are significantly overrepresented in Marin County's homeless population compared to the general population. Staff has been added to the Health and Human Services Department that are devoted to addressing homelessness and the disparate impacts from the pandemic. The County has recently succeeded in efforts to secure additional permanent supportive housing and temporary shelter beds and has refined the County's Coordinated Entry program. The program ensures all individuals experiencing homelessness have a default point of entry for accessing social services and prioritizes racial equity and medical vulnerability in securing housing placements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Successful community outreach and engagement has been critical in Marin's public health response in building trust in underserved communities to increase testing, quarantining and vaccination. The Canal neighborhood experienced soaring COVID-19 transmissions and infections throughout 2020 due to the high population density and that many residents experienced higher levels of exposure since they lacked the ability to work remotely in service-sector jobs.

In response, the Public Health Department, in partnership with the County Emergency Operations Center deployed on-site resources for Canal residents not limited to testing and vaccination clinics, but inclusive of food bank distribution and eligibility workers ready to assist area residents with unemployment benefit claims and apply for other financial assistance.

Additionally, when infections began to pick up in spring 2020 the County launched a visual-forward mask campaign entirely in Spanish and Vietnamese. Posters were distributed to more than 100 stores and on 50 area buses. Once vaccines became available, County Public Health partnered with the regional healthcare providers to target vaccine supply and distribution within the Canal. In alignment with the State's equity guidance to prioritize vaccines to communities hit-hardest from COVID-19 infections, County Public Health directed vaccines to Canal residents as they became available to the County as a whole.

The County plans to undertake a robust community engagement process over the next year to determine how the funds will be allocated within the eight identified priority spending areas. One of the most effective methods of reaching Marin's underserved communities during the policy making process has been through engaging with community-based organizations that directly serve them. The County's messaging is most effectively received in a trust-building way when it is delivered in partnership with local CBO's, senior-serving organizations, religious groups, and news outlets the community is already familiar with.

To this end, the County will continue partnering with local organizations for outreach, public education and engagement to ensure ARPA funds will maximize the short and long-term support of these communities.

LABOR PRACTICES

The County of Marin is committed to long term relationships with our labor partners. We will continue to explore how to best implement stronger policies to ensure that infrastructure projects deliver highly trained local jobs at a sustainable wage. In accordance with California Law, the County will continue to require prevailing wages with all large projects as part of our existing Procurement Policy.

USE OF EVIDENCE

While the County is not proposing to utilize SLFRF funds for evidence-based interventions nor evaluate projects through rigorous program evaluations that are designed to build evidence at this time, we do continue to work with departments to improve data-driven decision making that is focused on improved outcomes for the community. In particular, the Health and Human Services developed a 'Strategic Plan to Achieve Health and Wellness Equity' that is the over-



arching vision of the department and includes a commitment to using data to evaluate program effectiveness over time.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

The County of Marin is an organization committed to the use of data in evaluating our performance, and whether our County services are meeting the needs of all members of the public that we serve in Marin. In 2019 the County launched [COMPASS](#): the County's performance management program with open data as its centerfold. Designed to create a culture of continuous improvement and learning, Marin Compass relies on data to measure progress and inform our operational priorities. Initiatives are developed by engaging both our employees and residents.

Additionally, part of the annual Budget update process, Departments work on Workplans while outline for the Board of Supervisors and the public individual tasks or initiatives a Department aims to accomplish in the upcoming fiscal year (budget cycle). Current year initiatives and tasks for all 22 County Departments and can be found in the current year Budget document on the County's [Budget Overview page](#).

Project Inventory (Direct Use)

County of Marin projects directly funded by State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

PROJECT: PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Project ID #: 1

Category: 3.1-Public Sector Workforce: Payroll and Benefits for Public Health, Public Safety, or Human Services Workers

Budget: \$32,649,752

Status: Completed

Overview: With an annual operating budget of \$260 million, and more than 750 FTE employees, the Marin County Health and Human Services Department is the largest County department providing critical safety net services to the County's most vulnerable residents. This project identifies the payroll expenditures (salary and benefit costs) associated with programs in the Department that are primarily (>50%) devoted to COVID-19 response.

The Department has five primary divisions providing essential response services to the COVID-19 pandemic: Public Health, Emergency Operations Center, Whole Person Care, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, and Social Services. County staff in these divisions provide critical pandemic response such as running vaccination clinics, tracking public health data, coordinating permanent supportive housing programs, delivering mental health services, and providing critical social safety net services to at-risk residents.

Use of Evidence: The Public Health Officer and Health and Human Services Department has been committed throughout the pandemic to evidence and science-based health practices.

Performance Report: The latest metrics on COVID-19 infections, vaccinations and spread in Marin County can be found on coronavirus.marinhhs.org/surveillance. Marin County continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in California.

For the reporting period in which expenses were incurred, 362 County FTE were in programs that were more than 50% devoted to the public health emergency.

PROJECT: PUBLIC SECTOR WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Project ID #: 2

Category: 3.2-Public Sector Workforce: Rehiring Public Sector Staff

Budget: \$7,624,164

Status: Completed

Overview: As cited in the US Treasury Department Interim Final Rule, State, local, and Tribal governments cut over 1.5 million jobs in the early months of the pandemic in response to rapid declines in revenue. To date, it is estimated that local agencies are still more than 950,000 jobs below their pre-pandemic levels.

In response to the significant revenue declines and future uncertainties, and to protect existing filled jobs, the County Administrator's Office limited new hiring and filling of vacant positions in the early part of the pandemic. Additionally, in order to ensure our pandemic response was robust and effective, County Human Resources shifted recruitment resources away from County business operational positions towards the hiring of staff short term staff for the Emergency Operations Center and Public Health COVID-19 response.

As business operations return to pre-pandemic levels of business operations, there has been a corresponding need to restore the County workforce to pre-pandemic employment levels and these funds support the County government's ability to expand staffing to pre-pandemic levels.

Under the US Treasury guidelines, local governments may use recipients may use SLFRF funds "to hire employees for the same positions that existed on January 27, 2020 but that were unfilled or eliminated as of March 3, 2021, without undergoing further analysis." SLFRF funds may be used to cover payroll and benefit costs through the four-year reporting period.

Use of Evidence: Marin County general government services continue to be designed and delivered using best-practices and evidenced-based information.

Performance Report: Increase County staffing by a total of 70 FTE occurred under the authority of this reporting period.



PROJECT: REVENUE REPLACEMENT

Project ID #: 3

Category: 6.1-Provision of Government Services

Budget: \$10,000,000

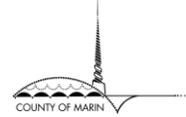
Status: Completed

Overview: Like many other local government agencies, the County of Marin experienced a loss in revenue in the year following the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdown in March 2020. The County's General Fund revenues are just over \$400 million annually, over which nearly half (45%) is comprised of local tax revenue. While property taxes are the largest portion of tax revenues, sales tax generates a substantial \$15 - 20 million per year and are also the basis for many state-level allocations for mandated health and safety functions.

In developing allowable uses for SLFRF funds, the US Treasury assumes that the COVID-19 pandemic by and large had negative impacts on local government revenues at some point between March 2020 and current day. The guidelines printed in the Final Rule provide that all local jurisdictions may assume a standard allowance for revenue loss of \$10 million. The \$10 million in revenue replacement received under this allowance may then be used for any general government services.

Use of Evidence: N/A

Performance Report: N/A



DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

All three of the County of Marin projects utilizing direct SLFRF funds deliver local government services Countywide, meaning that the demographics impacted will foremost be the demographics of the County as a whole. Marin County general race and income demographics, per the 2020 Census, are shown below:

White alone	85.3%	Hispanic or Latino	16.3%
Black or African American alone	2.8%	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	71.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1.0%		
Asian alone	6.6%		
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%		
Two or More Races	4.0%		
	100%		

However, it is also the case that the public health and social safety net services administered by the Department of Health and Human Services are targeted to the County's low income and very low-income residents. Additionally, throughout the pandemic the County has made it a priority to ensure that critical services are being delivered some of the hardest to reach residents, particularly those that are experiencing homelessness, are undocumented, are non-native English speakers, or are located far from County service locations without means or transport or reliable internet connectivity.

An example of this is the County's targeted outreach in identified geographic areas where significant income and public health disparities remain. Marin City, represented by Census Tract 1290, has a median household income of \$38,950, compared to its neighboring Census Tracts (1281 and 1302.02) with median household incomes of \$160,417 and \$105,913 respectively. The Canal neighborhood (Census Tract 1122.01) has a median household income of \$49,333. The median household income for Marin County as a whole is \$110,843. The Canal neighborhood is 89% Hispanic, and the Marin City neighborhood is 23% Black. Marin County as a whole is 16% Hispanic and 3% Black.

Not limited to earnings, the disparities in health outcomes for these geographic areas is also strongly evidenced. In the 2021 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps report, Marin County was ranked No. 1 in health factors and health outcomes among California's 58 counties for the 11th time in 12 years. However, the same report acknowledged that Marin has one of the lowest scores in income inequality and housing affordability. For instance, Black residents are 2.4 times more likely to experience premature death in Marin than White residents, and while 22% of Marin's Hispanic children are in poverty, only 2% of White children are.

The disparity has extended to COVID-19 infections. The latest County data shows that while Latinx residents comprise 16% of the County's population, they have accounted for 49% of total COVID-19 infections. Marin's White residents however, accounting for 71% of the County's population, have accounted for only 37% of cases countywide.

SUBAWARDS

All SLFRF funds for the County's projects are proposed to be utilized for County FTE providing direct services. None of the direct SLFRF funds will be contracted out.

PROGRAMMATIC DATA

	FTE under the authority in current period	Fiscal amount in current period
1: Public health*	362	\$32,649,752
2: Workforce Capacity**	70	\$7,624,164
3: Revenue loss	n/a	\$10,000,000
Total	432	\$50,273,916

*Number of County of Marin FTEs responding to COVID-19 supported under this authority

**FTEs rehired by County under this authority that were vacant on January 27, 2020 just before the pandemic began. This figure represents positions that were refilled during the pandemic that were supported by state and federal stimulus funds