

# KERN COUNTY

**HIGHLIGHTS:** Kern County did not spend its SLFRF towards COVID-19 response or include community-based organizations in its key investments. Some funds were allocated to the county's criminal-legal system. The county placed little emphasis on racial equity and community engagement in its SLFRF implementation.



Total ARPA SLFRF allocated: **\$174,853,685**

First tranche received in 2021: **\$87,426,842.5**



CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE
Use of Funds	<p>As of February 2022, Kern County has <b>made allocations</b> for its entire SLFRF including investments to expand behavioral health and substance use services, address homelessness, strengthen the County's public hospital, improve parks and outdoor spaces, improve water and sewer systems, and expand public broadband access.</p> <p>The county also set aside some funding to provide job training for restaurant workers of low income and those who experience chronic unemployment.</p>	<p>The county has not allocated any SLFRF to support COVID-19 responses or fund community-based organizations, especially those who serve the most impacted communities in the region such as agricultural workers.</p> <p>The county has proposed significant funds to provide premium pay only available for public employees, as well as funds to restore certain department operations. Both of these allocations included direct funds to police, detentions and probation.</p>	
Promoting Racial Equity	<p>Though not mentioning racial equity, the county did acknowledge COVID-19's inequitable impacts on certain communities such as school children and the impact of social determinants including income, employment, safe neighborhoods and health insurance status on health.</p>	<p>While generally recognizing the impact of social determinants of health, Kern County did not mention a plan to address racial inequities in its SLFRF plans. There were no specific programs or funding set aside to support the county's significant Latino/a/x and agricultural populations through the pandemic.</p>	



CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Kern County's ARPA recovery plan stated it would engage community groups by listening to their concerns.	The county has not taken any actions to understand community concerns around SLFRF. It was unclear how the county planned to solicit or incorporate any public feedback in its SLFRF spending decisions.	
<b>Transparency, Accessibility and Accountability</b>	The county posted up-to-date SLFRF spending information on its county budget website.	The county did not set up a public facing website for ARPA, nor did it provide a dedicated contact for further information or any public comment process for the public to further engage with its ARPA decisions.	

## RELEVANT LINKS

- County website: [www.kerncounty.com/government/county-administrative-office/cao/budget-and-finance](http://www.kerncounty.com/government/county-administrative-office/cao/budget-and-finance)
- 2021 Recovery Plan Performance Report: [www.kerncounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/7255/637660136417930000](http://www.kerncounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/7255/637660136417930000)
- 2021 Interim Report: [apps-treas.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/t0000000TZbC/a/t0000001emIR/fMgGRlbs8uk447eZEcRHkTyAxhFI7WotJGFjNdWDXxY](https://apps-treas.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/t0000000TZbC/a/t0000001emIR/fMgGRlbs8uk447eZEcRHkTyAxhFI7WotJGFjNdWDXxY)
- 2022 January Project and Expenditure Report: [www.kerncounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/8241/637828709564400000](http://www.kerncounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/8241/637828709564400000)

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) Scorecard for Kern County

For more information, visit [www.CPEHN.org/ARPAscorecards](http://www.CPEHN.org/ARPAscorecards)



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