VENTURA COUNTY

HIGHLIGHTS: As of early 2022, Ventura County has fallen behind in developing specific health and social projects and has yet to spend the majority of its first tranche of SLFRF to meet community needs. The county is using an equity lens and multiple community engagement strategies for its ongoing SLFRF implementation, including having translated surveys and materials in Spanish and interpretation in Indigenous languages to reach underserved communities. The county has set up an easy ARPA website to share up-to-date spending information with the public.

Total ARPA SLFRF allocated: **$164,326,748**

First tranche received in 2021: **$82,163,374**

CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE
Use of Funds	As of February 2022, Ventura County has only approved three SLFRF-funded projects totaling $5.7 million (or 3% of the first tranche) including a $1.2 million project that supports housing for transitional-age youth in Ojai. The county started discussing and outlining potential areas for its SLFRF **in October 2021.** According to the **latest Board of Supervisors discussion on April 26, 2022,** the county has moved along to "reserve" 39% or 65.3 million of its total SLFRF allocation towards public health, mental health, housing and homelessness, water and sewer infrastructure, and public safety. Specific projects with concrete budget information are yet to be set up as of April 2022.	Despite urgent health and social needs in its communities during COVID-19, Ventura County has been slow in developing concrete health and social projects. The county has not yet allocated SLFRF monies for many federally permitted uses, including directly funding community-based organizations (CBOs) and community health workers/promotoras, strengthening data collection and disaggregation, or proving food, transportation, rental and cash assistance for communities of low income including the county's Indigenous migrant and farmworker communities. According to the **April Board meeting,** Ventura county has also "reserved" 25 million SLFRF for its sheriff and public safety departments to improve information technology systems. The county failed to consider federally permitted SLFRF uses such as creating community-based crises response as alternatives to policing.	D

CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE
Promoting Racial Equity	In its **2021 Recovery Plan,** Ventura County acknowledged long-standing racial inequities before and during COVID-19, and started to employ "an equity lens in the areas of demographics, regionality, and socioeconomic status" in its overall SLFRF framework. It recognized diversity as part of the county's "asset." The county is engaging its 2020 Census Complete Count Committee, **Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion,** and key Departmental Community Liaisons in its ARPA decisions as well as outreach to hard-to-reach communities.	The county has not developed a racial equity plan or specific targets in implementing its SLFRF, nor has it identified any evaluation or performance measures for its equity promises. For example, the county did not seem to be collecting data disaggregated by demographic factors such as race/ethnicity, language, and immigration, to track or evaluate its efforts in "closing gaps" through SLFRF use.	B
Community Engagement	Ventura county has used **an array of ways** to engage with the communities for its ARPA implementation, with a focus on "hard-to-reach groups such as people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficient populations, and other traditionally underserved groups." The county has developed an ARPA fact sheet and a survey in English and Spanish to collect feedback from residents and CBOs. The county also sent out regular ARPA e-newsletters through its listservs. The county has previously developed a robust partnership with community-based organizations (CBOs) and community health workers/promotoras for multilingual community outreach during the pandemic. The county stated that it has continued to engage with these CBO partners on ARPA.	The county has not offered capacity building or technical assistance for small, grassroots CBOs to apply for funding under the SLFRF program.	A

CATEGORY	BEST EFFORTS	GAPS AND LIMITATIONS	GRADE
Transparency, Accessibility and Accountability	Ventura county set up an easy-to-navigate public-facing website to post relevant ARPA information for the public and an easy portal for the public to sign up for its e-news. The county posted its 2021 recovery plan and **translated the Plan into Spanish.** The county also set up dedicated ARPA email and phone for the public to contact regarding ARPA decisions.	The county did not share with the public its up-to-date federal compliance reports including the Quarterly Project and Expenditure reports.	B

RELEVANT LINKS

County ARPA website: **www.ventura.org/americanrescueplan/**

2021 Recovery Plan Performance Report: **vcportal.ventura.org/covid19/docs/Recovery-Plan-Performance-Report-County%20of%20Ventura%208.31.21.pdf**

2021 Interim Report: **apps-treas.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/t0000000TZbC/a/t0000001ell1/HV3pS5E3l2Dnnax8fxWdiEW31mFr5BeNMy2nTGsygfo**

2022 January Project and Expenditure Report: **home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-January-2022-Quarterly-Data-through-December-31-2021.xlsx**

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

For more information, visit **www.CPEHN.org/ARPAscorecards**

California Pan-Ethnic
HEALTH NETWORK