



**ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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Greetings Public Health Staff -

While over the past decade the health of many Alameda County residents has improved, we currently face challenging social and economic conditions that may impact those health gains. Accordingly, Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) has taken steps to address health inequities, including a new [strategic plan](#) for eliminating those inequities.

We also are embarking on an exciting new local policy initiative, [Place Matters](#), that aims to reduce health inequities through local policy change in [Housing](#), [Income/Economic Development](#), [Education](#), [Transportation](#), [Land Use](#), and [Incarceration](#). There will be one workgroup for each of these policy areas. We selected these policy areas because they represent the root causes of health inequities.

### **Get involved!**

Staff members from **every** division are invited to join the workgroups. **No prior experience in any of the issue areas is needed** - just a desire to be a part of this new chapter in ACPHD's history!

Interested? To join our local policy initiative, fill out an interest form - even if you cannot make a time commitment right now. **Click here for the interest form:**

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zMyUSVD\\_2bYdQ5b5Usop1y\\_2fA\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zMyUSVD_2bYdQ5b5Usop1y_2fA_3d_3d). No need to notify your supervisor; he/she will automatically receive a copy of your interest form. **Interest forms are due December 19<sup>th</sup>**

There will be a brief presentation on Place Matters and time for questions at the [Life and Death from Unnatural Causes: Health and Social Inequity in Alameda County](#) BBUs on **December 9 from 12:00 to 1:00 pm at 1000 San Leandro Blvd, San Leandro, in 200B** and on **December 11 from 12:00 to 1:00pm at 1000 Broadway, Oakland in 5000A**.

### **Workgroups**

**Who:** All ACPHD staffers are invited to fill out an interest form and join one of the Place Matters workgroups. Our local policy work needs to build experiences of all ACPHD staff in order to be successful. Additionally, the workgroups will be a place where any staff person can go to for support addressing local policy issues that surface during the course of their work.

Note: Due to funding requirements and staff capacity, the initial stages of this program will focus on the City of Oakland. However, the long-term vision is to encompass issues throughout the county. Opportunities for work in other cities can be brought to the workgroups for consideration. The ideas and strategies used in the workgroups will be relevant to work across the county.

**What:** Our broad definition of public policy is *any action the government takes or chooses not to take that seeks to address problems or issues*. The six workgroups will help design and implement a local policy agenda to reduce health and social inequities. The local policy agenda will be formed by engaging other staff, partners, and residents, and will be supported by current research. The local policy agenda will prioritize and strategically address what policies ACPHD focuses on.

As a workgroup member, you will play an important role in shaping ACPHD's policy priorities and you will learn new skills (e.g. policy analysis and advocacy), use existing skills, make connections with staff throughout the department, and work with residents and other stakeholders in the communities we serve. Additionally, you will be supported by the Place Matters Planning Team and workgroup coordinators.

## Two Levels of involvement

Depending on how much time you have, you can select from two levels of involvement. Workgroups will consist of a coordinator, **key members**, and **informed members**. The major difference between key and informed members is time commitments and whether you want to be a decision maker.

### Key Members (participation contingent on supervisor approval)

*Roles and responsibilities include:*

- Participate in workgroup decision making
- Attend a one-time orientation and review background materials
- Attend a 2-hour monthly meeting
- Complete follow up from meetings (emails, planning, etc.)
- Help plan engagement activities for residents, staff, and partners

*Other potential responsibilities:*

- Research an issue
- Monitor policies at the state and local level
- Engage in writing testimonies, letter writing, and advocacy

### Informed Members (Anyone can be an informed member.)

*Roles and responsibilities include:*

- Attend a one-time orientation and review background materials
- Receive policy updates
- Optional: Attend a monthly meetings and complete follow-up

## Next Steps

- **All staff members are encouraged to fill out an interest form by Dec. 19.**
- Dec. - Jan: Supervisors will be contacted for approval of "key" workgroup members
- Late Jan.: Key workgroups members will be notified of workgroup membership
- Late Feb.: Half-day orientation for all workgroups
- March: Regular on-going monthly meetings start

**Questions?** For more information on the Alameda County "Place Matters" team, see our website at <http://www.acphd.org/healthequity/placematters> or contact Alexandra Desautels at [Alexandra.Desautels@acgov.org](mailto:Alexandra.Desautels@acgov.org) or 510-208-1235.

Sincerely,



Anthony Iton, MD, JD, MPH