What is Place Matters?

The Alameda County Place Matters team **promotes health equity through community-centered local policy and systems change** focused on education, economics, criminal justice, housing, land use, and transportation.
The BARHII Framework
How ACPHD Began Working on Housing

- Foreclosure Crisis: *Rebuilding Neighborhoods, Restoring Health* report with Causa Justa::Just Cause in 2008

- Formed a Housing Workgroup with community-based organizations and ACPHD staff: *Proactive code enforcement* work began 2011
What has ACPHD done?

Protection
✓ Oakland Tenant Protection Ordinance
✓ Oakland Rent Stabilization and Just Cause Eviction
✓ Alameda County Anti-displacement Fund ($3.5 million)

Preservation
✓ Oakland Proactive Rental Inspection
✓ Supported California SB 655 Mold Legislation

Production
✓ Supported Alameda County A1 Housing Bond

Power: Oakland Tenant Justice Coalition; RISE Coalition in South County
A public health playbook

1. Articulate a Public Health, Health Equity Narrative

2. Generate Strong Political Will from Elected Officials

3. Engage and Support Leadership of Directly Impacted Community Members
Housing affordability impacts health

Asthma Emergency Department Visit Rate

Age-Adjusted Rate per 100,000

*CAPE, with data from the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, 2012-2014, and American Community Survey 2014 5-Year Files
Impact on Clients

For the others who are not so lucky, they are evicted/displaced due to their TB (tuberculosis) diagnosis. With how tough it has been to find affordable housing in Alameda County in general, these low-income patients become homeless and suddenly find themselves having nowhere to call home.

—Tuberculosis Control Unit

Homeless seniors who do not have family members willing to house them just begin to live in places not meant for human habitation.

— BHCS Contractor

“We have clients who were on track at some point in their lives, but due to a poor economy, unexpected health or family crisis, lost their footing when they lost their job and/or housing. These clients are the ones who tend to have more situational mental health illnesses such as anxiety and/or depression, and if these resolved, would also notice and improvement in symptoms. But, because of the severe housing crisis in the Bay Area, these issues are not getting resolved, and as time goes on, their depression and anxiety symptoms tend to worsen.”

—BHCS Contractor
Impact on Public Health

“When we spend all of our available staff/clinician time pulling our clients out of housing crises to prevent homelessness which send them on a downward spiral (and sometimes re-hospitalization or jail), rather than helping them find jobs, go to school, or engage in more positive, self-esteem building, hope engendering behaviors, then definitely housing issues interfere with our ability to deliver program services as intended.

— BHCS Contractor, Prevention and Recovery in Early Psychosis

Families cannot attend to their children's mental health needs when they are struggling to obtain basic needs - food and shelter. It definitely impacts our ability to get the outcomes we would like, and it means that our staff are having to become housing experts in order to help clients manage this crisis.

— BHCS Contractor, Lincoln Families

“When families are struggling with survival issues like having a roof over their head, it is difficult for them to focus on other issues like caring for their babies prenatally, healthcare, or supporting their babies/children to progress along their normal developmental trajectory. Many of the children in families with these housing stresses are falling behind in such areas as gross motor function, language development, social skills, etc. I support families who may be having mental health concerns, and it is difficult to help them connect with much-needed mental health services when life is focusing on survival day-to-day.”

— Family Health Services
Impact on Staff

“Drastically increased rents have displaced clients as well as staff that work for some of the agencies that we fund… I know some of my coworkers have been displaced by increased rent and cost of living out of Oakland or are living paycheck to paycheck because of increased cost of living.”

— ACPHD

“The rent has gone up so much that we don't have money left to make it through the week. I'm always stressed out and late on the rent.”

— BHCS

“We have had over 10 staff leave this year due to being priced out or evicted from their homes.”

— BHCS Contractor

“Staff often has to move to outlying geographical areas (Tracy, Vallejo, Modesto) and have difficult commutes with costly impact personally (accidents, sleep, loss of time with family) and professionally (late, loss of contact with community).”

— ACPHD
Menu of Actions

- Conduct health impact analysis of local housing and displacement issues
- Share data and engage with community organizations to identify partners
- Collect data and stories on housing impacts among PHD clients and staff
- Work with Health Officers to offer health-framing of displacement in op-eds, forums, panels
- Set tables and build bridges for communities to influence implementing agencies and county decisionmakers
- Fund community organizing
“County Health Director: Oakland's Housing Crisis Is a Prescription for Sicker, Shorter Lives”


“Public health problems in Oakland linked to housing crisis”

Community Partnerships

Causa Justa::Just Cause (Oakland):
- Ensuring housing habitability for tenants
- Strengthening Oakland’s tenant protection policies

Faith in Action East Bay and Filipino Advocates for Justice (Union City):
- Community survey of 400 renters
- Renter protection campaign in 2020

RCD and My Eden Voice (Alameda County Unincorporated Community):
- Renter protections in 2020-21
Contact Information

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