

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**34<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**"Leading with Excellence"**

**2021 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** ANSWERING THE CALL: CONTACT TRACING IN LA COUNTY

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** MARCH 2020 – PRESENT

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE **COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY**. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 A novel strain of SARS (COVID-19) appeared in December 2019 and threatened the  
 2 health of all persons across the globe. As part of the Department of Public Health's  
 3 (DPH) response to this deadly virus, the virtual Case and Contact Interview Branch  
 4 (CCIB) was activated to interview people with COVID-19 and their close contacts. Prior  
 5 to effective medications and/or vaccines case and contact interviewing (contact tracing)  
 6 were key strategies for mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Interviewers assessed  
 7 symptoms and risks of cases and their contacts, provided instruction for isolation or  
 8 quarantine, and offered information and referrals for food and shelter, rent assistance,  
 9 and linkages to healthcare. During the early phase of the pandemic, DPH deployed 600  
 10 public health staff to conduct contact tracing. However, the substantial increase in daily  
 11 COVID-19 cases required us to collaborate with public and private agencies, including  
 12 other County Departments, LA City, the State, and academic institutions to rapidly  
 13 onboard and train more than 4,000 employees, students, and volunteers to serve as  
 14 case and contact interviewers. Most of those deployed had no prior public health  
 15 experience. This project is worthy of Image award and/or other awards consideration.

**BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY**

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Public Health, 313 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90012		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 288-8117
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Gema Morales-Meyer DNP, MPH, RN CNS Director of Clinic Services Linda M. Aragon, MPH-- Case and Contact Interview Branch Deputy Director		<b>DATE</b> 6/24/2021
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Catherine Mak, MBA 		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 288-7240 <b>EMAIL:</b> GMEYER@PH.LACOUNTY.GOV
<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Barbara Ferrer, MPH, M.Ed Ph.D. 		<b>DATE</b> 06/25/21 <b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> (213) 288-8117 <b>Email:</b> bferrer@ph.lacounty.gov

**\*\*ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE\*\***

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**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project to the County. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success and specify assessment time frame. Use Arial 12 point font.

**CHALLENGE**

The emergence of Sars COV-2 (COVID-19) virus in December 2019 posed a major threat not only for Los Angeles County (LAC), but also for the United States and the entire world. As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in LAC in the early Spring of 2020 and without effective medications and vaccines, the Department of Public Health (DPH) shifted its focus from preventing widespread infection to mitigating/slowing the spread. This shift required DPH to contact individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 to provide education about their exposure, issue isolation orders, and elicit information about their close contacts so they could be notified of possible exposure and receive quarantine orders.

As part of their Incident Command System, DPH launched a virtual Case and Contact Interview Branch (CCIB) with more than 200 Children’s Medical Services staff in the California Children’s Services Medical Therapy Program (MTP). The MTP staff created a team reporting structure that CCIB continues to use today and began working remotely 7 days a week to conduct case and contact interviews (contact tracing) utilizing paper forms and Excel spreadsheets. CCIB quickly expanded to over 600 staff from other DPH divisions, including Clinic Services, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, and Division of HIV and STD Prevention and 150 staff from the County Library to conduct case and contact interviews.

By May of 2020, average daily number of COVID positive cases increased into the thousands and would quickly exceed the capacity of the current DPH and County library staff assigned to conduct comprehensive contact tracing. DPH needed to quickly scale up its ability to contact every COVID-19 case and trace the close contacts of each case to contain the spread of COVID-19 and gradually lift stay at home orders that required social distancing measures and movement restrictions.

**SOLUTION**

To meet this challenge DPH worked collaboratively across public and private agencies to swiftly identify, notify, onboard, train, and deploy more than 4,000 employees from other County Departments, the City of Los Angeles, the State, public and private agencies; dislocated workers; students; and volunteers to serve as case interviewers and contact tracers:

- **DPH engaged the Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources (DHR) to work with all County departments to identify and deploy approximately 2,000**

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- **county staff to serve as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs)** assigned in CCIB and assigned two Emergency Operation Center staff to serve as a liaison between DPH and the other County Departments. DHR Director Lisa Garrett also emailed all County staff regarding their role as a Disaster Service Workers and informed them of their potential deployment to CCIB to support contact tracing efforts.
- **DPH entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Department of Public Health** to redirect more than 1,000 State staff to remotely support DPH's contact tracing efforts.
- **DPH entered into an MOU and financial agreement with LA City** to onboard, train, and create contact tracing teams for more than 500 LA City staff from various departments, including sanitation, street services, building and safety, and library. This allowed LA City staff to work remotely and reduced furlough days.
- **DPH entered into a worksite agreement with Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS)** to onboard and train more than 250 Los Angeles County residents dislocated from their jobs as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this was a time-limited placement, many of these individuals were hired by DPH for longer-term employment.
- **DPH created an academic COVID-19 contact tracing internship program** and partnered with several colleges and universities, including University of San Francisco, Glendale Career College, Azusa Pacific University, University of Southern California, California State University Northridge, California State University Dominguez Hills, to train and support 601 clinical and non-clinical students to conduct contact tracing remotely.
- **Volunteers were recruited through the DPH website.** More than 30 volunteers completed training and were assigned to various contact tracing teams to support weekend contact tracing efforts.

To support the contact tracing teams, CCIB created numerous training videos, referral guides, reference documents, updated scripts, and wellness resources that were accessible to all interviewers online through the TEAMS platform. CCIB also provided/coordinated advance training, conducted regular Q&A sessions, created pathways for interviewers to receive immediate feedback while conducting interviews, and replaced the paper interview forms with a newly designed CRM-based contact tracing system to capture interview responses more efficiently and effectively.

CCIB worked with DPH Public Health Information Systems and Human Resources to rapidly create CRM, AWS, and email accounts for thousands of incoming DSWs, which they needed to begin their CCIB assignment. CCIB also worked closely with the DPH's Organizational Development and Training Division which was responsible for developing training curriculum/material, conducting weekly trainings, and maintaining a comprehensive database to track training for all CCIB interviewers.

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**BENEFITS**

**1. EFFICIENT USE OF DISPLACED STAFF AND DISLOCATED WORKERS.**

- The March 19, 2020 stay at home order issued by the Governor Newsom resulted in the disruption of services and work performed by government employees, including staff in DPH, other County Departments, LA City, and State departments, which allowed more than 3,000 government employees to be redirected to CCIB to support contact tracing efforts.
- DPH collaborated with WDACS to hire more than 250 dislocated Los Angeles County workers to support contact tracing efforts.
- 601 students in the academic COVID-19 contact tracing internship program completed a combined total of over 7,200 hours of contact tracing.
- DPH utilized online platforms (TEAMS, Live WebEX, CRM and AWS) to virtually train all staff assigned to CCIB and conduct all case and contact interviews remotely.

**2. MAXIMUM PRESERVATION OF LIFE AND HEALTH**

- As of June 23, 2021, CCIB contact tracing teams have initiated follow-up on 92.1% of all cases within one-day of assignment (979,096 of 1,063,470) and completed 576,995 interviews. These residents received critical information about testing positive for COVID-19 and steps needed to prevent further spread of COVID-19.
- As of June 23, 2021 CCIB contact tracing teams have initiated follow-up on 76.3% of all contacts assigned to them within one day of assignment (178,733 of 234,356) and completed 151,263 interviews, which contributed to DPH’s efforts to increase awareness about potential exposure to COVID-19 among close contacts of those testing positive and the steps they need to take to protect themselves and others.

These efforts contributed to minimizing the spread of COVID-19 and preventing many more potential illnesses and deaths in Los Angeles County.

**3. MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNITY TRUST IN GOVERNMENT-LED RESPONSE**

DPH is committed to racial/ethnic and socioeconomic equity and inclusion in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is committed to ensuring CCIB interviewers have the training, skills, and resources to:

- Conduct interviews in the individuals’ preferred language,
- Provide information on resources and referrals (such as housing, food, and healthcare) to support individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts, and
- Effectively engage COVID-19 cases and their contacts to complete interviews by responding to questions and/or concerns in a culturally appropriate manner.

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**Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only.** Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

**Goal I. Make investments that transform lives, Strategy I.1: Increase our focus on prevention initiatives**

DPH large scale case and contact interviewing efforts significantly contributed to efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 prior to and after the availability of effective medications and vaccines, thus preventing illness and deaths in countless Los Angeles County residents. This, in turn, prevented reliance on County health care and other systems by those who would have been infected with COVID-19.

**Goal III. Realize tomorrow’s government today, Strategy III.3: Pursue operational effectiveness, fiscal responsibility and accountability**

**III.3.2: Manage and maximize County assets.** DPH’s partnerships with multiple County departments, the State, and LA City WDACS, and colleges and universities helped DPH to rapidly launch and expand a virtual Case and Contact Interview Branch to onboard, train and assign more than 4,000 employees, displaced workers, students, and volunteers to conduct COVID-19 case and contact interviewing activities. This effort also allowed government employees, dislocated workers, students, and volunteers to work remotely; provided jobs for dislocated workers; and contributed to efforts to minimize furlough days and layoffs among government employees.

**How Does Contact Tracing Work?**

**¿Cómo funciona el rastreo de contactos?**

**If you test positive for COVID-19**

- Stay home and away from others to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- If you have symptoms you have at least 1 day after your fever is gone and the 5 symptoms in your respiratory symptoms and at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started.
- If you have had symptoms you have at 10 days after symptoms you had your test.

**Public Health will call:**

1. About the public health team.
2. The people you have been around while you were sick.

**The public health department will contact you to follow-up. It is important to talk this call.**

**Public Health will ask:**

1. How many people you were around.
2. How many people had symptoms.

**You should avoid you getting mixed up with another person, please provide them with your complete and correct information.**

- They may call you more than once to check how you are doing during your 14 days of home.
- They will provide you with information on next steps based on your responses.
- They will also provide you with information on how to access services like testing for COVID-19 or how to find a doctor if you don't already have one.

**Si dio positivo en la prueba de detección del COVID-19**

- Quédese en casa para evitar transmitir el virus a otras personas.
- Si tiene síntomas, debe estar en casa al menos 1 día después de que haya bajado la fiebre y los síntomas respiratorios hayan mejorado.
- Si tiene síntomas, debe estar en casa al menos 10 días después de que hayan pasado los síntomas desde que comenzaron.

**El Departamento de Salud Pública lo llamará para realizar un seguimiento. Es importante que atienda.**

**Salud Pública le preguntará:**

1. Con cuántas personas estuvo en contacto.
2. Cuántas personas tuvieron síntomas.

**Evite estar confundido con otra persona, por favor proporcione información completa y correcta.**

- Ellos pueden llamarle más de una vez para verificar cómo se está haciendo.
- Ellos también le darán información sobre los próximos pasos basados en sus respuestas.
- Ellos también le darán información sobre cómo acceder a servicios como la prueba de COVID-19 o cómo encontrar un médico.

**Si estuvo en contacto con alguien con COVID-19**

- Debería quedarse en casa y permanecer en salud durante 10 días o hasta que haya pasado los síntomas de COVID-19.
- Tenga mucho cuidado desde el día 1 hasta el día 14 y tenga precauciones adicionales desde el día 10 en adelante, como usar mascarilla, mantener a 6 pies de los demás y lavarse las manos con frecuencia.
- Si usted ha estado estrechamente relacionado y no presenta síntomas de COVID-19 no necesita permanecer en aislamiento. Se recomienda estar en casa y monitorear sus síntomas. El monitoreo consiste en la verificación diaria de una serie de síntomas de COVID-19 y 2 síntomas respiratorios en una escala de cinco niveles. Para más información, visite <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19-Isolation-Requirements.aspx> y hable con Salud Pública.

**El Departamento de Salud Pública lo llamará para realizar un seguimiento. Es importante que atienda.**

**Salud Pública le preguntará:**

1. Si tuvo algún contacto de COVID-19 o si se mezcló el público en aislamiento.
2. Si usted ha estado en los lugares donde se están haciendo pruebas.

**Come el día de estar que se mezcla con otros personas, por favor proporcione información completa y correcta.**

**Es posible que Salud Pública lo llame más de una vez para verificar cómo se está haciendo.**

**Los días de información sobre los próximos pasos basados en sus respuestas.**

**También proporcione la información sobre los próximos pasos y servicios como obtener la prueba de COVID-19 o cómo encontrar un médico.**

**Si tiene preguntas de Salud Pública, llame al 1-833-641-9195.**

**Public Health | www.lapublichealth.com**

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY**

DPH trained and assigned more than 4,000 employees, displaced workers, students, and volunteers to conduct COVID-19 case and contact interviewing activities. This effort also allowed government employees, dislocated workers, students, and volunteers to work remotely; provided jobs for dislocated workers; and contributed to efforts to minimize furlough days and layoffs among government employees. This effort prevented illness and deaths in countless Los Angeles County residents. This, in turn, prevented reliance on County health care and other systems by those who would have been infected with COVID-19

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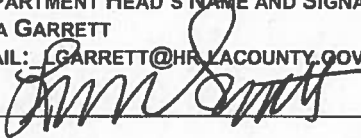
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**FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY**

*(For single department submissions, do not include this page)*

<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION 500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, 5 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> MOLLY GONZALEZ EMAIL: <u>MGONZALEZ@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>  Leslie Foxvog <small>Digitally signed by Leslie Foxvog DN: cn=Leslie Foxvog, o=Department of Human Resources, ou=HR, email=leslie.foxvog@hr.lacounty.gov, c=US Date: 2021.06.25 11:14:58 -0700</small> 6/25/21	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> LISA GARRETT EMAIL: <u>LGARRETT@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>  
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AGING, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES 3175 WEST 6 <sup>TH</sup> STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90020	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> STEPHANIE MAXBERRY EMAIL: <u>SMAXBERRY@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> OTTO SOLORZANO EMAIL: <u>OSOLORZANO@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> EMAIL: _____	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> EMAIL: _____
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	

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<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION 500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, 5 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> MOLLY GONZALEZ EMAIL: <a href="mailto:MGONZALEZ@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV">MGONZALEZ@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV</a>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> LISA GARRETT EMAIL: <a href="mailto:LGARRETT@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV">LGARRETT@HR.LACOUNTY.GOV</a>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AGING, AND COMMUNITY SERVICES 3175 WEST 6 <sup>TH</sup> STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90020	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  STEPHANIE MAXBERRY EMAIL: <a href="mailto:SMAXBERRY@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV">SMAXBERRY@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV</a>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  OTTO SOLORZANO EMAIL: <a href="mailto:OSOLORZANO@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV">OSOLORZANO@WDACS.LACOUNTY.GOV</a>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>  	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> EMAIL: _____	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> EMAIL: _____
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>  	