CDPH
California Department of Public Health

CDPH MCAH Strategy in Action:

Advancing Black Birth Equity Together in California

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) remains steadfast in its commitment to addressing the critical and unique needs of Black families and other marginalized groups across the state with meaningful community collaboration. Building on the foundation of the implications from the Centering Black Mothers report, with ongoing engagement with the Black Birth Equity Statewide Advisory Group (SAG), CDPH has developed the CDPH Black Birth Equity (BBE) Action Plan in partnership with consultants from the California Coalition for Black Birth Justice (the Coalition) and Liberation by Design.

CDPH has synthesized input from Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) team focused conversations, input sessions with the BBE SAG, and a survey (administered to the CDPH steering committee, SAG, MCAH Directors, and PEI/BIH Coordinators) to inform the development of a two-year action plan for the department.

The objectives selected for this action plan were guided by clear criteria. Specifically, the objectives were chosen because they directly address Black maternal and infant health disparities through program, policy, systems, or environmental change; fall within the CDPH Center for Family Health's sphere of influence; are feasible with current staff capacity and resources; can be achieved within a two-year timeframe; and hold potential for scaling to increase future impact.

CDPH plans to implement the objectives of this action plan using a **lead**, **partner**, **and fund framework**.

As a **lead**, CDPH will focus on strengthening and expanding programs internal to the department, with an emphasis on advancing program, policy, systems, and environmental change.

As a **partner**, CDPH will prioritize meaningful engagement with Black-led and Black-serving organizations, recognizing their critical role in shaping and sustaining community-driven solutions. The department will also initiate and expand collaborative projects with other state departments, agencies, and stakeholders.

As a **funder**, CDPH will support community-based models that improve neighborhood conditions, reduce chronic stress, and expand access to high-quality, respectful health care.

Visit the Black Birth Equity webpage for more information and resources.

Action Plan Strategies, Objectives, and Key Results:

1. **Program Adaptation:** Strengthen, refine, and align MCAH programs to provide culturally responsive services to Black mothers, birthing people, and their families. (Lead)

Objectives:

- Collaborate with the CDPH Office of Health Equity (OHE) to 1) apply their Black Health Equity Assessment Framework across MCAH programs, 2) assess how programs are delivering services to Black mothers, birthing people, and their families and 3) determine recommendations for program refinements.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31st, 2026, CDPH team develops recommendations for program refinements, informed by the assessment.
- Pilot integrating best practices (informed by Black Infant Health, Perinatal Equity Initiative, etc.) into an MCAH program to deliver culturally responsive and congruent services.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31st, 2026, CDPH team develops an inventory of best practices.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31st, 2027, CDPH team pilots integrating at least 1 best practice into 1 MCAH program.
- Refine and adapt the BIH and PEI program models. Which may include issuing guidance for adapted program implementation, strengthening affirmative public awareness campaigns, uplifting best practices in community engagement, and providing ongoing trainings for local partners.
  - **Key Result:** By October 31st, 2027, CDPH will release the BIH and PEI procurement with refinements incorporated.

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Action Plan Strategies, Objectives, and Key Results:

2. Policy Advancement: Collaborate across sectors to identify and implement policies that reduce Black birth inequities. (Lead and Partner)

Objectives:

- Strengthen consistency and collaboration regarding implementation of SB 65 (2021), the California Momnibus Act, to address racial disparities in maternal and infant mortality. Continue to facilitate processes to develop, disseminate, and implement policy recommendations including improved data and review (e.g., PARC suicide prevention recommendations).
  - **Key Result:** By July 31, 2026, finalize a streamlined and timely process for dissemination of newly released PARC policy recommendations, including steps to engage implementation partners and community partners.
  - **Key Result:** By July 31, 2027, report out on dissemination of the PARC recommendations.
- Continue to coordinate with DHCS to align with the Birthing Care Pathway and other MediCal policy shifts (e.g., increasing access to doulas/midwives).
  - **Key Result:** By June 30, 2026, identify MCAH program outreach materials, resources, and strategies.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31, 2026, develop and implement an engagement plan for sharing doula and midwife resources with partners.

Action Plan Strategies, Objectives, and Key Results:

3. Enhancement of Data Resources: Partner to innovate and enhance current approaches of illustrating community health, wellbeing, and satisfaction of Black mothers and birthing people served by MCAH programs (Partner)

Objectives:

- Develop recommendations guiding the complementary use of MCAH program participant and population-based epidemiologic data to quantify the health and well-being of Black mothers, birthing people, and infants.
  - **Key Result:** By April 30th, 2026, CDPH BBE data workgroup members conduct an organizational assessment of existing data sets and indicators.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31, 2026, data recommendations are developed by the CDPH BBE data workgroup in collaboration with external partners.
- Pilot implementing the recommendations, collaboratively developed by the BBE data workgroup and external partners, by creating a publicly-accessible data resource.
  - **Key Result:** By January 31, 2027, begin piloting implementation of the data workgroup recommendations, including piloting a publicly accessible Black Birth Equity data resource.

Action Plan Strategies, Objectives, and Key Results:

4. **Community Collaboration:** Involve Black-led and Black serving organizations and community members with lived experience in authentic, bi-directional, power-sharing to inform program, policy, systems, and environmental change work. (Partner)

Objectives:

- Pilot collaborating with paid community advisors/lived experience action drivers (LEADs) for an MCAH program or initiative to embed more family voice and insight into program models.
  - **Key Result:** Through December 31st, 2027, CDPH will implement structured engagement of the Statewide Advisory Group (SAG), including convening quarterly connection points with the BBE Statewide Advisory Group and compensating them for their time.
  - **Key Result:** Through December 31st, 2027, SAG feedback is garnered and applied to the ongoing implementation of the BBE action plan strategies and objectives.
- Facilitate a community of practice of Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ) program providers and state administrators from across the state to uplift best practices in community engagement and program implementation regarding efforts to reduce Black maternal and infant health disparities.
  - **Key Result:** By December 31st, 2026, CDPH will convene the BBE Local Community of Practice three times to identify promising practices within the network and inform an inventory of best practices to advance birth equity across MCAH programs and initiatives.

5. **Community Innovation Resources:** Fund community-based organizations to implement strategies advancing Healthy Black Birth Outcomes guided by the Centering Black Mothers Report, Coalition Agenda, and other promising practices. (Fund)

Objective:

- Develop and implement a pilot program to fund local community-based organizations promoting healthy birth outcomes for Black mothers and birthing people.
  - **Key Result:** By July 31, 2027, the awarded CBOs complete the first pilot year of the grant program and share updates on progress and impact.
  - **Key Result:** By January 31, 2028, CDPH reports out on the progress and impact of pilot grant awards.
  - **Key Result:** By January 31, 2029, CDPH applies lessons learned from the pilot CBO awards to optimize the award process.