



Fact Sheet

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Office of Health Equity

The Office of Health Equity (OHE) was established, as authorized by Section 131019.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, to provide a key leadership role to reduce health and mental health disparities to vulnerable communities.

Comprised of three units, Community Development and Engagement Unit, Policy Unit, and Health Research and Statistics Unit, OHE will include a Deputy Director, who is appointed by the Governor or the State Public Health Officer, and is subject to confirmation by the Senate. The Deputy Director of the OHE will report to the Director at CDPH and work closely with the Director of Health Care Services.

A priority of this groundbreaking office will be the building of cross-sectoral partnerships. The work of OHE will be directed through their advisory committee and stakeholder meetings. The office will consult with community-based organizations and local governmental agencies to ensure that community perspectives and input are included in policies and any strategic plans, recommendations, and implementation activities.

Aligning state resources, decision making, and programs, OHE will accomplish all of the following:

- Achieve the highest level of health and mental health for all people, with special attention focused on those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage and historical injustice, including, but not limited to, vulnerable communities and culturally, linguistically, and geographically isolated communities.
- Work collaboratively with the Health in All Policies Task Force to promote work to prevent injury and illness through improved social and environmental factors that promote health and mental health.
- Advise and assist other state departments in their mission to increase access to, and the quality of, culturally and linguistically competent health and mental health care and services.
- Improve the health status of all populations and places, with a priority on eliminating health and mental health disparities and inequities.

Duties of OHE include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Establish a comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategic plan to eliminate health and mental health disparities (updated every two years).
- By October 1, 2013, establish an advisory committee.
- Establish an interagency agreement between the State Department of Public Health and the Department of Health Care Services to outline the process by which the departments will jointly work to advance the mission of the OHE.
- Conduct demographic analyses on health and mental health disparities and equities (updated periodically, but not less than every two years).
- Build upon and inform the work of the Health in All Policies Task Force.
- Assist and consult with state and local governments, health and mental health providers, community-based organizations and advocates, and various stakeholder communities.