Immigrant Services

Alameda County is home to over 1.6 million people, of which approximately 500,000 are immigrants. The Alameda County Social Services Agency (SSA) offers an array of programs and services to assist immigrants, refugees, and asylees entering our communities. These programs, including Refugee Social Services, Protective Services, CalWORKs, Refugee Cash Assistance, General Assistance (GA), CalFresh, California Food Assistance Program, and Medi-Cal, provide economic support, job training/placement, social adjustment, case management, and supportive services.

Human Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31% of Alameda County residents are foreign born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 in 2 Alameda County children have a foreign-born parent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43% of Alameda County residents speak a language other than English at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share of Noncitizens Whose Benefits Use Could Be Considered in a Public Charge Determination

- Share of noncitizens receiving cash benefits (CalWORKs, GA, SSI) under the current public charge rule: 41%
- Share of noncitizens receiving cash (CalWORKs, GA, SSI) and noncash benefits (CalFresh, Medi-Cal) under the proposed expansion of the public charge rule: 29%
- Share of noncitizens in families that receive cash and noncash benefits: 3%

Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) tabulation of U.S. Census Bureau 2014-16 American Community Survey

Looking Forward

Public Charge — Public charge is a test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to deny admission to the United States or refuse an application for lawful permanent residency. Programs used to determine public charge currently include cash benefits (CalWORKs, GA, SSI) and long-term care at the government’s expense. The federal government has proposed expanding the definition to include Medicare/Medi-Cal, Medicare Part D, CalFresh, and rental assistance subsidies. Before making a Final Rule, the federal government is required to respond to the public comments submitted opposing the expansion of the public charge definition. Alameda County strongly opposes this proposed expansion and will continue to support policies that defend and advance the rights of all immigrants.

Funding — Alameda County supports the FY 19-20 State Budget which includes $12.7 million over three years for an immigration rapid response program and $65 million ongoing for legal services for immigrants to assist with Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals applications, naturalization, deportation defense, and other immigration remedies giving priority to unaccompanied minors and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) individuals. The budget allocates additional funding to launch two pilot programs for immigrants seeking legal services—(1) mental health assessments and (2) coordination of wrap around services.

Legislation — Alameda County is co-sponsoring Assembly Bill 944 (Quirk) which aims to strengthen programs for immigrant families by extending CalWORKs benefits beyond 12 months for indigent sponsored non-citizens.

Al’s Story

In September 2018, SSA referred Al, a recent asylee from Eritrea, to the Burma Refugee Family Network (BRFN), a community partner, for social adjustment services. He and his wife received Refugee Cash Assistance, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal benefits. Al was assigned to BRFN, who found a tutor to accelerate his and his wife’s English-language skills. In a short time, Al learned enough English to obtain his driver’s license. He now works as an Uber driver with good prospects for an additional job to better provide for his family. Without the social adjustment support, Al may not have been able to achieve these milestones and successfully integrate into his community.
The Division of Aging & Adult Protection (DAAP) provides a continuum of services, including protective services, for veterans and vulnerable adults. DAAP programs include: Adult Protective Services (APS), Office of the Public Guardian-Conservator (PG-C), the Public Administrator's Office (PA), Veterans Services Office (VSO), and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP).

Gene, a 78-year-old veteran residing in Berkeley, suffered from claustrophobia, depression, and other chronic conditions that prevented her from being able to care for herself and her home. Gene came to the attention of APS after APS received a report alleging deteriorating health and safety concerns. APS found Gene covered in feces, her caretaker intoxicated, and the home hoarded. A subsequent Public Guardian (PG) investigation determined that Gene could not safely return home and that her family was not able to act in her best interest. The PG was then appointed conservator over her person and estate. With assistance, her hoarded home was cleaned up, and a new caregiver was hired. Through the efforts of APS and PG, Gene’s care and conditions have improved considerably, allowing her to live safely in her own home.

Elders represent a growing share of both the County’s population and APS cases investigating abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Sources: Alameda County Social Services Agency, U.S. Census, American Community Survey

Looking Forward

Funding — The FY 19-20 State Budget includes $5.8 million over the next three years to continue and expand training for APS staff and the Public Guardian-Conservator, and Public Administrator. APS programs require robust support to expand a well-trained workforce and the services necessary to effectively serve the growing demands of an aging population.

Preventing Homelessness — Alameda County received one-time State funding for Home Safe, an innovative two-year homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing pilot to connect clients to the comprehensive supports vital for them to remain housed.

Gene’s Story

Gene, a 78-year-old veteran residing in Berkeley, suffered from claustrophobia, depression, and other chronic conditions that prevented her from being able to care for herself and her home. Gene came to the attention of APS after APS received a report alleging deteriorating health and safety concerns. APS found Gene covered in feces, her caretaker intoxicated, and the home hoarded. A subsequent Public Guardian (PG) investigation determined that Gene could not safely return home and that her family was not able to act in her best interest. The PG was then appointed conservator over her person and estate. With assistance, her hoarded home was cleaned up, and a new caregiver was hired. Through the efforts of APS and PG, Gene’s care and conditions have improved considerably, allowing her to live safely in her own home.
The Alameda County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) supports the independence of more than 75,000 older adults (ages 60+) in Alameda County by providing access to senior centers, legal assistance, friendly visitors, group exercise, medication and case management programs, and healthy meals, in congregate settings and through home delivery. With guidance from the Commission on Aging, the AAA funds more than 30 community-based organizations to advocate for and serve the needs of older adults.

### Human Impacts

- **59%** of older adults renters are “cost-burdened” - meaning more than 30% of their income is consumed by their rent.
- **6,400** bags of nutritious groceries provided during FY 2018-19.
- **6** “Gardening Together” Community Garden and Nutrition Education program sites throughout Alameda County low-income older adult housing facilities.

Sources: Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, California Department of Finance, U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2017 5-Year Estimates

### Looking Forward

**Funding** — The federal budget increases funding for Senior Nutrition programs by $10 million from federal Fiscal Year 2017-18, with $5 million increases to both Congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals. Unfortunately, this 1% increase in funding will have minimal results because per-meal costs increased by more than 20% in recent years.

**2021-2024 Countywide Area Plan for Older Adults** — Every four years the AAA engages in an extensive planning effort, which includes needs assessments, policy discussions, analysis, and collaboration with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Countywide Plan for Older Adults that identifies the needs and priorities of older adults and strategies to effectively respond to those needs.

### Mr. T’s Story

Mr. T, a 96-year-old widower, comes to J-Sei with the support of his daughter and primary caregiver, Mrs. O, where he enjoys congregate lunches, reiki, and socializing with friends. Mr. T, Mrs. O, and members of their family regularly attend J-Sei’s potluck movie night, where they watch a Japanese film with old and new friends, followed by a guided discussion. Mrs. O participates in the caregiver support program where she benefits from supportive discussions and resources shared by other caregivers. To remain connected, Mr. T recently became a J-Sei home delivered meal volunteer! This family is just one example of the diverse services available throughout Alameda County to older adults, caregivers and their family members to ensure that older adults are able to age safely in their communities, and that family members and caregivers have the support they need.
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

In-Home Supportive Services is a mandated program that provides homecare for the elderly and individuals with disabilities. The program supports low-income individuals in their own residences and communities, rather than placing them in more restrictive and expensive institutional care settings, which can cost over $140,000 per year.

Human Impacts

- **24,484** Alameda County IHSS recipients, as of January 2019
- **118** average usage hours per month, per IHSS recipient
- **$439.9 million** in wages paid to nearly 24,600 IHSS providers in FY 2018-19
- **24%** of providers receive health benefits through the Public Authority’s health program

Looking Forward

**Sick Leave** — Beginning in 2018, IHSS providers received one day of paid sick leave per year, increasing to two days per year on January 1, 2020, and up to three days in 2023. Alameda County and 10 other counties across the State are evaluating the potential impacts these increases will have on the IHSS program.

**Funding** — The IHSS Maintenance of Effort (MOE) that was implemented by the State as part of the FY 17-18 Budget provided short-term relief but resulted in significant cost increases in later years. The FY 19-20 State Budget includes the Governor’s proposal to lower the MOE inflation factor and set counties’ MOE bases at a lower level. While this proposal is welcome, the new MOE could be ended by the State in future budgets.

**Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)** — New federal law requires the implementation of EVV, a telephone- and computer-based system that electronically verifies service visits, by January 2020 for Medicaid-funded personal care services and by January 2023 for home health care services.

Kim’s Story

Kim is an 88-year old woman who resides alone in a two bedroom apartment. She suffers from severe dementia and high blood pressure. Her IHSS social worker discovered that Kim was malnourished and a victim of elder abuse. The worker made a referral to Adult Protective Services and connected Kim to an external case management service. Kim was also referred to the Public Authority, who linked Kim with an IHSS provider to assist her with her daily activities. Today, Kim continues to receive IHSS services from a stable provider and case management, and is scheduled to move into a secure senior apartment complex, where she will receive ongoing support.
Children and Family Services

Alameda County Children and Family Services (CFS) provides services that include:

- Abuse and neglect investigations
- Family crisis and ongoing support services
- Reunification and family maintenance services
- Guardianships, adoptions, and foster care services

### Human Impacts

- 252 children/youth exited to reunification
- 127 children/youth exited to adoption
- 79 children/youth exited to legal guardianship

- Since 2007, under the **Title IV-E Waiver** there has been a significant reduction in children placed in out-of-home foster care. Overall, the annual number of children entering foster care has declined by 45% since the start of the Waiver and 25-30% of all children in active cases continue to be served in-home while still maintaining reductions in recurrences of maltreatment.

- The **Safety Organized Practice (SOP)** was fully implemented in all the departments. CFS launched an internal video marketing campaign to highlight and promote the benefits of the SOP framework, tools, and/or skills and share the positive impacts on children and families served. To date, 5,345 children have been served using the SOP.

### Looking Forward

**Title IV-E Waiver** — CFS has positively utilized the federal Title IV-E Waiver for the past 12 years and will now see it sunset on September 30, 2019. With this awareness, CFS is continuing to review programs and contractual services funded by the Waiver as this loss will ultimately result in restructuring and paring down of programs and services to meet budget limitations. CFS will ensure in the review that it maintains a robust array of services and programs for children, youth, and families, such as the full utilization of the SOP framework and the future steps of reviewing and collecting data to inform best practices in leveraging SOP.

### The Mills Family Story

CFS intervened with the Mills family where a teenaged daughter was battling a life-threatening eating disorder. The Mills and medical providers struggled for years to collaborate which continuously led the family to be out of compliance with medical treatment plans. CFS was able to convene a Child and Family Team meeting at the hospital with the medical providers, without the use of medical or social work jargon. This meeting ultimately fostered a breakthrough in communication between the family and medical providers. Where the child was once too anxious to participate in meetings, she now actively participates in her team meetings and advocates for herself with medical providers.
CalFresh

CalFresh is California’s version of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The CalFresh program provides assistance for low-income households to purchase nutritious food. When the national economy or a regional, State, or local economy is in trouble, CalFresh is among the most effective government responses. CalFresh is a vital support to ensure individuals and families are able to meet their basic nutritional needs.

Human Impacts

Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Individuals who are low-income and food insecure must make tough decisions, such as purchasing inexpensive and unhealthy food, or choosing between paying for food or other basic needs, such as medical expenses, utilities, transportation, and housing.

- 97,421 individuals aided per month as of January 2019
- 13.4% Food Insecurity Rate for Alameda County as of June 2018
- 1 in 3 children face the threat of hunger every day

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, the decline in CalFresh participation over the past three years largely reflects an improving economy; however, many still face hunger everyday.

Source: Alameda County Social Services, Jan. 2019

Looking Forward

Policy — Effective June 1, 2019, individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or California State Supplementary Payment (SSP) benefits will be eligible for CalFresh as a result of the ending of the SSI Cash-Out policy. According to System Data Exchange report (March 2019), approximately 48,130 SSI/SSP individuals will become newly-eligible for CalFresh in Alameda County. Additional CalFresh policy changes include the expiration of the statewide Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver in August 2019 which will impose time limits on the number of months an ABAWD individual can receive CalFresh benefits. Potentially 9,800 Alameda County residents could be at risk of losing their CalFresh eligibility, placing this population at greater risk of food insecurity and hunger.

Funding — The FY 19-20 State Budget provides for one-time CalFresh funding as a result of increased CalFresh participation due to the elimination of the SSI Cash-Out policy and the ABAWD waiver expiration later this year. It also provides a permanent hold harmless provision for families that experience a loss/reduction in CalFresh benefits due to the inclusion of SSI income until they leave the CalFresh program.

Ms. Malagon’s Story

Ms. Malagon came to the U.S. from Mexico, where she was a victim of a violent crime. Ms. Malagon is safe now and has since been granted a U Visa. Ms. Malagon supported herself and her son, Christian, by cooking, cleaning, and caring for others; however, her earnings were barely enough to support her family. She was afraid to apply for public assistance, but she had a son to provide for, so she gathered the courage to apply. Ms. Malagon was approved for CalFresh benefits and, when asked about the program, she stated “CalFresh helped us out in a time of great necessity and I feel more secure.”
The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Program provides time-limited cash aid, as well as employment and employment support services, to eligible non-exempt adults with children. CalWORKs services are designed to promote self-sufficiency and provide parents with assistance to enter or re-enter the workforce. Most CalWORKs families are categorically eligible to receive Medi-Cal and CalFresh (Food Stamp) benefits.

Looking Forward

Funding — The FY 2019-20 State Budget includes a 13.1% CalWORKs maximum grant level increase to raise the grants to approximately 50 percent FPL. An adult with two children would need to work 40 hours per week at $47.09 per hour, equivalent to $99,446 annually, in order to cover costs for housing, food, health care, transportation, child care, and taxes. This is equivalent to nearly four full-time jobs at the California minimum wage. More funding is needed to reach all CalWORKs families and reduce deep poverty. The FY 19-20 State Budget provides CalWORKs Stage One child care to eligible families for 12 months, raises the CalWORKs asset limit and the motor vehicle exemption, and increases the Earned Income Disregard to better align with the increasing state minimum wage.

Policy — Alameda County continues to assist individuals facing acute employment barriers to become job ready through the expansion of the CalWORKs 2.0 initiative and the implementation of the CalWORKs Outcomes & Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) which facilitates the tracking of outcomes and accountability for the program. Additionally, Alameda County has sponsored Assembly Bill 944 (Quirk) to align CalWORKs policy with existing CalFresh policy to extend eligibility to sponsored noncitizens who would go hungry or homeless without aid.

Other — Alameda County Social Services Agency is piloting the Medical Assistant Certificate Training Program and the CalWORKs Housing Support Program to assist homeless recipients in securing permanent housing.

Human Impacts

- $785 current maximum monthly CalWORKs grant of a family of 3
- 1 in 10 children in Alameda County live below the poverty line
- 3 in 4 families living in poverty in Alameda County are working

True Cost of Living for Family of Three in Alameda County

- $78,116 Difference
- $21,330 Federal Poverty Level
- $99,446 Self-Sufficiency Standard

Source: 2017 U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community 1-year Survey for Alameda County

Anthony’s Story

After applying for CalWORKs benefits, Anthony and his wife received assistance from the Social Services Agency. He was provided with an EBT card and CalFresh benefits that same day. Anthony conveyed relief that he and his family would also receive health benefits through Medi-Cal. CalWORKs allowed him and his wife to feed their children and obtain temporary shelter and homelessness assistance. After the approval of his benefits, Anthony was introduced to SSA’s employment staff. He was most appreciative of the assistance of his case manager in obtaining a job with Tesla. Anthony explains, “I came to Social Services to get some help and find a job. My case manager referred me for a job interview, helped me with transportation and, at last, I got an awesome job. I am grateful to Alameda County!”
Homelessness

Multiple factors contribute to homelessness in Alameda County: high housing costs, affordable housing shortages, neighborhood transformations, and deinstitutionalization. According to the 2019 Point-in-Time Count, there were 8,022 individuals experiencing homelessness in Alameda County, 79% of whom were unsheltered. The Alameda County Homelessness Council collaborates to align County programs and initiatives to address homelessness and provide services to the County’s vulnerable population.

Human Impacts

Fiscal Year 2017-18 Performance Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals Served Systemwide</th>
<th>11,415</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Received Rapid Re-Housing</td>
<td>2,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Transitional Housing</td>
<td>1,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served in Emergency Shelters</td>
<td>2,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained Permanent Housing</td>
<td>1,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)</td>
<td>2,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in PSH who Remain Housed</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43% increase in homeless individuals between 2017 and 2019
22,800 projected winter relief bed nights in FY 2018-19
70 disabled homeless General Assistance clients assisted in FY 2017-18
10,561 patients served by Health Care for the Homeless in FY 2017-18
$245 million of Measure A1 affordable housing bond commitments to support over 2,400 new units
$340 million of investments detailed in the Alameda County Homelessness Action Plan 2018-2021

Sources: Alameda County Homeless Management Information System data, Alameda County Homelessness Council

Looking Forward

Funding — The FY19-20 State Budget includes the Governor’s proposal of a historic $2.7 billion investment across multiple programs to address housing and homelessness. This funding includes $650 million of one-time homeless emergency funds for jurisdictions to fund a variety of projects. Of this funding, $175 million will go directly to counties. The package also includes funding to continue Supplemental Security Income Advocacy to assist homeless disabled individuals in applying for disability benefits, $120 million for Whole Person Care, and $52 million to address youth homelessness. While these investments are critical to helping counties address the shelter crisis, ongoing investments are needed given the severity and depth of the current crisis.

Legislation — The County is co-sponsoring Assembly Bill 143 (Quirk-Silva), which would expand existing law that allows certain jurisdictions, upon declaration of a shelter crisis, to suspend certain State and local laws, regulations, and ordinances to help mitigate the effects of the County’s shelter crisis.

Debra’s Story

Following an abusive relationship, Debra was living on a very low income with limited resources. She was referred to Abode’s Sunrise Village Emergency Shelter, which provides emergency housing and supportive services. Having newfound stability allowed Debra to enhance her professional skills and pursue her dreams. Upon securing permanent housing through Southern Alameda County’s Housing/Jobs Linkages Program, Debra took business classes and received job and financial literacy training. From this support, she obtained a new, full-time position and was able to provide for herself and son. Today, her son is the general manager of a Fremont business. Debra commented, “That’s your goal with kids: to prepare them so they can fly ...just like what Abode Services did for me.”
Medi-Cal & The Affordable Care Act

Medi-Cal is California's version of the federal Medicaid program. It is a public health insurance program that provides health care services for low-income individuals, families with children, seniors, persons with disabilities, foster care youth, and pregnant women. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) expands strives to improve both access to health care and the general health of all residents.

Human Impacts

- **371K** individuals receive Medi-Cal (approximately 1/4 of County’s population)
- **80%** increase in Medi-Cal caseload since January 2014
- **10K** undocumented children receive Medi-Cal as a result of Senate Bill 75, which provided full scope Medi-Cal for all children

**Looking Forward**

**Funding** — The FY 2019-20 State Budget includes a State individual mandate and increases subsidies for middle income households to purchase Covered California plans to increase coverage and affordability; expands full-scope coverage to eligible young adults 19-25 years of age regardless of immigration status, which would expand eligibility to approximately 3,000 individuals in Alameda County known to the Medi-Cal program; and provides supplemental payments and rate increases for providers, including but not limited to physicians, dentists, family planning services, Intermediate Care Facilities for developmentally disabled and HIV/AIDS waiver services.

**The ACA** — At the federal level, Congress repealed the individual mandate to maintain health insurance beginning on January 1, 2019. If a Texas federal judge’s decision is upheld that the ACA is unconstitutional on grounds that the individual mandate is no longer enforceable, 176,000 Alameda County residents could lose coverage gained through Medicaid and Covered California. The County supports policies and funding to reduce health inequities and increase access to quality health care for all Alameda County residents, regardless of socioeconomic or immigration status.

**Legislation** — Alameda County supports Senate Bill 29 (Lara) and Assembly Bill 4 (Arambula), which would extend eligibility for full-scope Medi-Cal benefits to all individuals of all ages, if otherwise eligible, regardless of immigration status.

**Ms. Garcia’s Story**

Ms. Garcia, an undocumented immigrant, was diagnosed with a rare lung disease and was on the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) transplant waiting list. She had been granted restricted Medi-Cal for emergency services only, due to her immigration status. Ms. Garcia was advised about the Permanently Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL) State aid category in the hopes of qualifying for more coverage. Ms. Garcia was found eligible, approved for full-scope Medi-Cal, and was successfully able to receive her transplant. One year later, after full recovery, Ms. Garcia came in to the office to express her gratitude and appreciation for the PRUCOL program.
Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA is federal legislation that strengthens the nation’s employment, training, and education programs and establishes employer-led local workforce development boards that administer programs and establish policy. The Alameda County Workforce Development Board (ACWDB) administers these programs for the County, outside the City of Oakland. Career Centers provide job seekers access to high-quality training programs and career development services, leading to industry-recognized credentials and high-wage job opportunities within targeted industries and occupations. Youth, dislocated workers, and employers are also served under WIOA.

Human Impacts

In FY 2017-18:

- 1,010 participants enrolled in WIOA
- 655 WIOA participants entered into employment
- 283 WIOA participants completed industry training

Sources: ACWDB and CalJOBS, 2018

Looking Forward

Funding — The FY 19-20 State Budget includes significant investments in the workforce, higher education, and K-12 education workforce. ACWDB will continue to successfully secure federal and State discretionary grant funding that aligns with ACWDB’s priorities, in order to offset cuts to WIOA Title I programs and serve job seekers with barriers to employment.

Service Strategy — ACWDB’s Sub-regional Network Workforce is a new program design implemented in FY 2018-19 to leverage partner resources, serve more people, and counteract funding cuts.

Reentry Initiatives — ACWDB will continue its leadership in developing/scaling promising programs for reentry populations, in collaboration with the Sheriff’s Office, Probation Department, and California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The East Bay Regional Planning Unit is in the process of applying for Prison-to-Employment grant implementation funding.

Sharron’s Story

Sharron was unemployed for nine years and believed that her housing instability, older age, and unfamiliarity in navigating for jobs online, were barriers to employment. With the help of her WIOA Career Counselor, Sharron established workforce goals, developed an up-to-date resume, filled out online job applications, earned a certificate in Food Handling, and secured proper work attire. Sharron was hired at an Assisted Living facility, within just two months of participation in WIOA services, and credits her WIOA Career Counselor for changing her life for the better.
Produced by the Alameda County Administrator's Office

in conjunction with

Alameda County Social Services Agency,
Alameda County Health Care Services Agency, and
Alameda County General Services Agency