

# 2021 COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



## STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The County of Orange supports programs that improve outcomes while reducing the financial burden on taxpayers. As the sixth most densely populated county in the nation, Orange County is responsible for implementing a variety of state, federal and local programs for a diverse population. To meet the needs our residents and ensure the health and stability of our communities, the County strives to provide a strong safety net system, while remaining fiscally prudent and accountable to county taxpayers. Accordingly, the County has identified the following state policy priorities to help focus our legislative and advocacy activities for 2021.

### COVID-19 Response & Recovery

Orange County must continue responding to the COVID-19 pandemic while simultaneously working toward recovery for the health of our residents and our economy. The County will strenuously advocate for its fair share of resources whether it be for personal protective equipment, vaccinations, or economic stimulus. Additionally, the County will continue to state the need for direct funding and local control.

### Homelessness & Housing

Orange County has endeavored to comprehensively prevent and address homelessness, while working with limited funding. The County will continue to support additional funding, a streamlined funding process, and resource flexibility to address homelessness most effectively within our community.

### Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice

The County's Integrated Services Strategy (IS) remains a high priority to address individuals with behavioral health issues interacting with Orange County's criminal justice system. The IS invests in a system-of-care with programs to reduce crime and incarceration outside of institutional settings, and resources are needed to assist in this important work. In addition, the realignment of the Division of Juvenile Justice to counties will require careful attention and advocacy to ensure a smooth transition.

### In-Home Support Services (IHSS)

A significant and growing gap between In-Home Support Services (IHSS) costs and available revenues continues to put extraordinary cost pressures on the County's budget and other core services and mandated programs, including public health, behavioral health and public safety. The County will work with impacted stakeholders to pursue a long-term solution to alleviate IHSS cost pressures.

### California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM)

CalAIM is a multi-year initiative by Department of Health Care Services to restructure and reform the Medi-Cal program. While this initiative was postponed due to COVID 19 this initiative will provide opportunities for the County to obtain additional resources for a variety of programs including payment reform, system integration, and data sharing and collection efforts. The County will continue to advocate for reducing administrative burdens, revenue loss and mitigating any potential workforce impacts.



# 2021 COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The County of Orange supports programs that improve outcomes while reducing the financial burden on taxpayers. As the sixth most densely populated county in the nation, Orange County is responsible for implementing a variety of state, federal and local programs for a diverse population. To meet the needs our residents and ensure the health and stability of our communities, the County strives to provide a strong safety net system, while remaining fiscally prudent and accountable to county taxpayers. Accordingly, the County has identified the following federal policy priorities to help focus our legislative and advocacy activities for 2021.

### COVID-19 Response & Recovery

Orange County must continue responding to the COVID-19 pandemic while simultaneously working toward recovery for the health of our residents and our economy. The County will strenuously advocate for our fair share of resources whether it be for personal protective equipment, vaccinations, or economic stimulus. Additionally, the County will continue advocating for direct, federal funding to local governments to offset lost general fund revenues.

### Homelessness & Housing

Orange County has endeavored to comprehensively prevent and address homelessness, while working with limited funding. The County will seek increased federal appropriations for key housing and homeless assistance grant programs. The County will also advocate for legislative initiatives to combat homelessness that authorize funding for comprehensive services and care coordination for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including housing stabilization services funding paired with housing subsidies. The County also supports increased funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program and Community Planning and Development Programs, including increased funding for Community Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership and Emergency Solutions Grants. The County will advocate for an increase in federal funding to serve the increasing demand for disability compensation, health care related claims, and housing needs of its growing veteran population.

### Infrastructure Funding

The County will identify and advocate for major infrastructure investment needs including two critical flood control protection projects: the Santa Ana River Mainstem Project and the Westminster-East Garden Grove Flood Risk Management Project.

### Homeland Security and Public Safety Funding

The County will advocate for continued or increased federal funding for critical public safety programs, including the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center, the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program. The County will also support measures that promote and advance federal, state, and local partnerships to provide evidence-based treatment services to those in custody with mental illness and substance use disorders.

### Nuclear Fuel Storage

Since the official shut down of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) in 2013, efforts have begun to transfer the used nuclear fuel into on-site storage and to eventually remove and dispose of radioactive components and material. The County will continue to advocate for and make progress on interim storage options to enhance safety and security and pursue longer term off-site fuel storage for SONGS.