

# Boulder County, Colorado **ARPA SLFRF Recovery Plan Performance Report**



## **State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds 2021 Report**

**Boulder County, Colorado  
ARPA SLFRF Recovery Plan Performance Report through July 31, 2021**

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<https://www.bouldercounty.org/government/budget-and-finance/american-rescue-plan-act-arpa/>



<b>GENERAL OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Boulder County’s Forward Together Safely (FTS).....	3
Boulder County’s Pandemic Response and Recovery Organization (PRRO BoCo) .....	3
2021 COVID Response Requests (CRR) .....	5
Community Engagement and ARPA SLFRF Planning .....	8
Summary of Key Outcomes and Goals.....	9
Opportunities and Challenges During the Reporting Period.....	11
<b>Uses of Funds.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Near-Term and Immediate Needs 2021 COVID Response Requests.....	15
Mid- to Long-Term COVID-19 Response and Recovery Planning .....	16
Other Federal Recovery Funds: Emergency Rental Assistance .....	16
<b>Promoting Equitable Outcomes .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Current and Intended Outcomes to Promote Equity .....	18
Boulder County’s Commitment to Racial Equity .....	18
PRRO BoCo Racial Equity Team .....	21
Measurement of Equity Outcomes within CARES and ARPA SLFRF Program(s) .....	28
Boulder County’s Equity-Based Current and Planned Use of Funds, per Category.....	31
<b>Community Engagement.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Community-Focused Planning.....	33
PRRO BoCo Community Engagement and Resource Coordination Team (CERN).....	34
<b>Labor Practices.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Use of Evidence.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Project Inventory .....</b>	<b>43</b>
List of Projects.....	43
Performance Report .....	48



## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### Executive Summary

The federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021, and within that Act the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) provides urgent and targeted state and local funding for COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Boulder County (the County) has received half of a total allocation of \$63,359,749, with the second half anticipated mid-2022, to respond to COVID-19 needs through 2026 for projects obligated by the end of 2024.

In order to address the negative health and economic impacts of COVID-19, Boulder County, Colorado has planned and implemented a shorter-term immediate needs process and mid- to long-range community engagement and planning efforts to effectively leverage its federal ARPA SLFRF funding in meaningful ways. These combined efforts will continue to allow Boulder County to be responsive to the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

Response and recovery efforts to-date and planning and community engagement processes currently underway are described in Community Engagement section below. These processes will help Boulder County further understand the needs in the organization and community to support decision-making for ARPA expenditure beyond the immediate needs and ensure ARPA funds are invested to support a strong and equitable recovery that addresses racial, health, and economic disparities.

Boulder County's planning for and implementation of use of ARPA SLFRF funds to improve racial equity outcomes will build upon and be done in collaboration with significant racial equity work being done in the organization. In Boulder County, race matters. We center race in our equity work because we know historically and currently, race is the biggest predictor of disproportionate outcomes and disparities. Good government is impossible without racial equity. In 2018, the Board of County Commissioners with the full support of county and racial equity leadership, made transformational racial equity one of the County's strategic priorities.

The future vision of Boulder County as an institution is one that has overcome systemic racism and all other forms of oppression. The recognition of the impact of racism on the need for intentional efforts toward eliminating racism is foundational to transformational equity work. To that end, Boulder County's institution of government will reflect full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies, and practices.

Boulder County's racial equity work in relation to ARPA SLFRF funds is more fully described in the Promoting Equitable Outcomes section.



## Boulder County's Forward Together Safely (FTS)



In April 2020, Boulder County implemented its Forward Together Safely (FTS) initiative. This effort responded to the 2020 phase of the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring safety, equity, sustainability, and clear communications to employees and the public about the slow return to in-person

services. Forward Together Safely also helped manage and implement funding received under the federal CARES act in response to the pandemic. Boulder County was provided \$27,983,411 by the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), of which \$16,135,618 was used by Boulder County directly, and the remaining \$11,847,793 was distributed by the county to towns and cities of Boulder County. Some of the larger programs CARES Act funds helped support included:

- Grants for childcare that allowed child-care programs to operate and provided essential workers with young children the ability to remain in their roles.
- Human services initiatives helping people who struggled with lapses in work or loss of work through utility, housing, and other assistance.
- Local non-profit support, and additional opportunities to reach out for help.
- Telework resources for County staff and devices and connectivity supports for families and individuals, which increased accessibility for community members to access help during a time when many on-site services were either appointment-only or remote.
- Public health support that included COVID-19 testing, a public health call-center, and purchasing personal protective equipment for health care providers, shelter workers, and other individuals working closely with the public.
- Economic assistance to local businesses through multiple rounds of grant funding.
- Learn more about Boulder County CARES Act initiatives.

## Boulder County's Pandemic Response and Recovery Organization (PRRO BoCo)



In early 2021, in response to the need for a more comprehensive organizational structure to manage and respond to the evolving pandemic and recovery efforts of the County, Boulder County created the Boulder County Pandemic Response and Recovery

Organization (PRRO BoCo). This internal organizational structure consolidated the response and recovery efforts between Boulder County Public Health and Boulder County, and includes several management, enterprise and programmatic teams across the County, all focused on addressing the pandemic, defining strategic goals, continuation of strategies that center on racial equity, engaging priority populations and key partners across the county, and allocation of pandemic recovery resources and funding needs, including for immediate needs with federal funds received under the American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

### PRRO BoCo Strategic Goals

Four key goals have helped guide the County's current response and recovery efforts, informing structure, actions, and processes, and form the basis for assessing progress, success, and areas for improvement, as well as for developing specific yet flexible, phase-related objectives, including:



- Prevent and mitigate the spread and impact of COVID-19 to the general community and among priority populations, as measured by weekly status updates.
- Create a **stronger, more diverse, and more equitable community by identifying and responding to inequities related to secondary impacts of the pandemic** (including resultant health, social, educational, and economic impacts), through ensuring priority populations have rapid, effective access to support resources and addressing root causes through policy and systems change.
- Mitigate harm to and protect the local government, health, and service delivery related to the pandemic response with no disruption in provision of essential services.
- Demonstrate accountability to the general community and priority populations, and build a unified vision, structure, and integrated processes to support the community.

Boulder County's PRRO BoCo teams work together and engage in ongoing situational awareness assessments that inform the County's necessary COVID-19 response and planned services to the community. Examples include the tables below produced on a regular basis.

### PRRO BoCo Strategic Plan Goals Situational Awareness as of July 2021

Goal	Sampling of Key Indicators	Trending	Observations
1. Prevent and mitigate the spread and impact of COVID-19 to the general community and among priority populations	Cases Hospitalizations & Deaths Vaccination Rate	↑	Increase in cases among children- school start 8/21 Continued disparate rates Multiple vaccine hesitancy hurdles and vaccine equity issues
2. Create a stronger, more diverse, and more equitable community by identifying and responding to inequities related to secondary impacts of the pandemic (including health, social, educational, and economic impacts), through ensuring priority populations have rapid, effective access to support resources	Human Service Program Utilization Behavioral Health Trends Business Revenue & Employment Trends	↔	Continued higher level of demand for economic and other assistance Elevated signs of adverse behavioral health impacts Variable and disparate impacts on businesses, employment
3. Mitigate harm to, and protect the local government, health, and service delivery related to the pandemic response with no disruption in provision of essential services.	County service delivery Employee return to on-site	↔	Most service delivery maintained Return to site varies
4. Demonstrate accountability to the general community and priority populations, and build a unified vision, structure, and integrated processes to support the community.	Outreach Input & Alignment Communications	↔	Variable Transactional Incomplete



COVID-19 Incidence in Boulder County: 84.1 per 100,000 (8/10/21)  
up from 42.6 per 100,000 (7/25/21)

**Substantial  
transmission in  
Boulder County**  
[CDC Transmission Tracker](#)

Indicator - If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher level is selected	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days	0-9.99	10-49.99	50-99.99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs <sup>1</sup> that are positive during the past 7 days	0-4.99%	5-7.99%	8-9.99%	≥10.0%

#### PRRO BoCo Strategic Approaches

PRRO BoCo goals are accomplished through several strategic approaches, including:

- Creation of a county-wide response: sharing of resources, rapidly responding to adaptive needs, providing a central management team, being clear about roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority, and management by objectives to stay coordinated and focused.
- Use of data, including disaggregated data, and focus on policy and planning relevant data with appropriate protections in place to address any confidentiality issues.
- ***Focus on priority populations and embed racial equity across the response.***
- Strengthen relationships with the community to increase testing, vaccinations, prevention, working with cultural brokers and culturally adapted communications.
- Focus Boulder County organizational policies, protocols, and services on safety and racial equity, while ensuring the mental health, physical safety, and overall well-being of staff regardless of their work location during the pandemic.
- Efficiently use and maximize shared community resources with partners, to amplify response and outreach efforts across the county and engender collective commitment.
- Consider impact on the business community and economic vitality alongside planning and decision-making for prevention, mitigation, and compliance.

#### 2021 COVID Response Requests (CRR)

The announcement of ARPA SLFRF funds in spring of 2021 enabled PRRO BoCo to plan and implement a short-term “immediate need” funding request process called the 2021 COVID Response Requests (CRR) process. The CRR process was modeled after the successful implementation of the 2020 Unmet Needs Assessment (UNA) process, developed by the Forward Together Safely team on behalf of CARES Act funding allocated through December 2020.

Of the \$63,359,749 million total ARPA SLFRF funding awarded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to Boulder County, the Boulder County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) approved an initial SLFRF allocation of \$5 million toward the 2021 CRR immediate need phase of the County’s continued COVID-19 recovery efforts (this amount is subject to change based on total





needs evaluated and approved by BOCC in September 2021). The CRR process was designed to evaluate and respond to immediate/ongoing unmet needs of the community and internal County operations that exist as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency that were not funded from Boulder County annual department or office budgets cycle.

Examples of County immediate needs prioritized during the CRR process include:

1. Projects and programs which were CARES Act funded through the end of 2020 but should be continued as they are eligible for SLFRF funds, address unmet immediate needs, and are important for the organization and the community.
2. Requests for immediate funding for resources, including staff, to adequately manage SLFRF funds.
3. Emergency Needs, such as unforeseen or unexpected ARPA-eligible emergency needs requiring funding prior to the BOCC making mid- to long-term decisions later in 2021 and beyond.

The CRR funding request process was open from May through July 31, 2021 to all Boulder County staff to submit internal department need requests and/or community need requests sponsored by a County department. Boulder County received a total of 44 CRR funding requests totaling approximately \$15M.

#### 2021 COVID Response Requests Evaluation Process

Funding requests submitted through the CRR intake process have been undergoing an extensive review and evaluation process which is still ongoing, prior to periodic briefing and funding recommendations made to the BOCC. This review process includes reviews and feedback from the following groups:

- PRRO BoCo Team Leads and Racial Equity Leads to ensure projects are in line with overall PRRO BoCo team goals and objectives
- An Evaluation Team made up of individuals across the County organization who evaluate and rate each CRR funding request based on a set of approved CRR Evaluation Criteria aligned with PRRO BoCo Strategic Goals discussed above. The Evaluation Criteria consist of five key evaluation measures, including public health impact; economic impact; advancement of racial, health, and/or equity outcomes; continuation of County operations; and readiness to implement – see CRR Evaluation Criteria below
- An Eligibility Team made up of representatives from the Commissioners' Policy Team, County Attorney's Office, and the Office of Financial Management
- PRRO BoCo Sponsors/Leadership Team
- Boulder County Board of County Commissioners



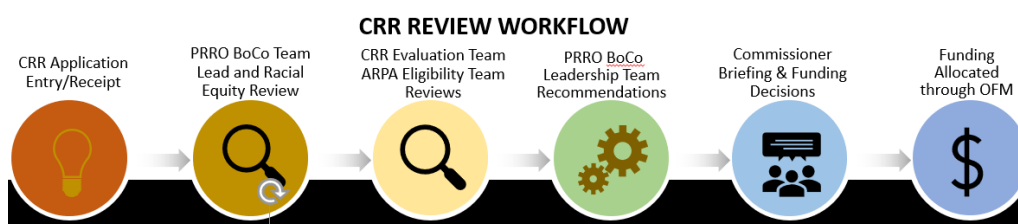
COVID Response Requests evaluation criteria included the following goals and objectives:

Evaluation Criteria	Consideration Examples (Strategic Plan Objectives)
<p><b>COVID-19 public health impact</b></p> <p>Prevent and mitigate the spread and impact of COVID-19 to the general community and among priority populations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduces spread, case count, and / or deaths</li> <li>2. Increases detection, prevention, and / or public health order compliance</li> <li>3. Stabilizes or reduces mental and other adverse health impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Containment</li> <li>• Resource Coordination</li> <li>• Public Health Accountability</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Advance COVID-19 testing strategies, locations, and practices that prevent spread of disease, especially among priority populations</li> <li>5. Ensure COVID-19 testing activities are implemented with an equity and structural racism lens, including that testing is financially and geographically available, culturally adapted and sensitive, and effectively utilized by priority populations</li> <li>6. Support Boulder County and community partners with COVID-19 testing protocols and work collaboratively to identify resources to protect workers, particularly for the critical work force</li> <li>7. Collaborate and coordinate with all enrolled providers to make sure vaccine-eligible populations are covered</li> <li>8. Connect COVID+ priority populations who are in quarantine or isolation to support services* so they can safely comply with disease control guidance</li> </ol>
<p><b>COVID-19 economic and other secondary impacts</b></p> <p>Create a stronger, more diverse, and more equitable community by identifying and responding to inequities related to secondary impacts of the pandemic (including resultant health, social, educational, and economic impacts), through ensuring priority populations have rapid, effective access to support resources and addressing root causes through policy and systems change.</p> <p>Consider impact on the business community and economic vitality alongside planning and decision-making for prevention, mitigation, and compliance.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increases employment opportunities</li> <li>2. Stabilizes or reduces adverse housing, food, childcare, work environment, etc. impacts</li> <li>3. Stabilizes or reduces adverse impacts on ongoing business operations</li> <li>4. Ensure PRRO BoCo teams have the epidemiologic information and resource navigation referrals to support mitigation of secondary impacts</li> <li>5. Ensure communications and knowledge transfer between the Boulder County Funders Collaborative and PRRO BoCo effort</li> <li>6. Determine services scaled during the COVID-19 crisis, report on metrics to share outcomes and successes</li> <li>7. Facilitate responses to gaps identified throughout the human services delivery continuum</li> <li>8. Business owners / operators, consumers and employees, including Spanish-speaking, have clear information regarding current public health requirements to operate safely to protect employees and clients, to safely participate in the economy</li> <li>9. Boulder County advocates for state policy to support employee and workforce needs including economic aid, unemployment service navigation, re-training and re-employment</li> <li>10. Economically support small businesses in unincorporated Boulder County with capital to counteract economic loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic, resilience reviews, assistance applying for state and federal funds, and additional technical assistance.</li> <li>11. Provide specialized assistance to businesses from communities that have been or are currently socially or economically disadvantaged</li> <li>12. Develop and implement a coordinated, equitable county-wide economic recovery plan</li> </ol>



<b>Advancement of racial, health, and/or economic equity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improves service outreach, access and / or measurable outcomes for those most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19</li> <li>2. Decreases systemic barriers to health and economic opportunities</li> <li>3. Support data that incorporates a racial equity lens, including disaggregation of data, use of qualitative data, etc.</li> <li>4. Provide tools and forum for review plans and implementation activities through a racial equity lens</li> <li>5. Advance a culture of racial equity and strengthen the will, skill and knowledge of county staff to advance health and racial equity</li> <li>6. Internally elevate and activate community feedback from Community Task Force and Resource Coordinator activities to improve the effectiveness of Boulder County services, communication, outreach and delivery to mitigate the disparate impacts of COVID-19</li> </ol>
<b>Continuity / transition of County Operations to provide best in public service</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure safe continuation of County operations while adhering to COVID-19 policies</li> <li>2. Support staff health and well-being related to new working conditions brought on by the pandemic, and as relevant to phases 1, 2, 3</li> <li>3. Ensure compliance and internal policy adherence with COVID-19 safety protocols and guidance on County property and while engaged in County business</li> <li>4. Plan and coordinate the transition to post-pandemic operations</li> </ol>
<b>Readiness of request to implement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plans, staffing, and budget clarity, completeness and alignment with unmet need described</li> </ol>

The CRR review and approval process is illustrated by the below workflow:



To date, the BOCC has approved approximately \$3M in project funding through the 2021 COVID Response Request process (see Funding Uses and Project Inventory sections below for more detail). Remaining unapproved CRR applications are scheduled for review by the BOCC in September 2021, and additional review meetings as needed.

### Community Engagement and ARPA SLFRF Planning

In addition to the initial allocation of CRR requests currently being evaluated, Boulder County is also actively undergoing an extensive mid- to long-term SLFRF planning process. This includes solicitation of a consulting partner to provide strategic planning services to the County, including help with analyzing existing community partner and stakeholder feedback and other data to advise and guide the BOCC's longer-term SLFRF decision-making process.



The County also is partnering with the Community Foundation of Boulder County and Rebuild by Design as facilitator on a community engagement process. In collaboration with five partner organizations that encompass approximately 200 community agencies and non-profit organizations, a Boulder County ARPA Community Steering Committee has been formed in August 2021 to solicit and provide countywide input.

The community engagement process will bring together diverse institutions with deep roots in the Boulder County community to listen to the needs of County residents, particularly historically excluded groups and those most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The process will focus on all areas eligible under the American Rescue Plan Act and within Boulder County jurisdiction. Boulder County will work with Rebuild by Design, the facilitator provided through support of the Community Foundation of Boulder County, and identified partner organizations to gather expertise from government, academia, NGOs, and affected stakeholders -- individuals and groups with complementary and diverse skills and contacts within the most affected communities. This group will build from previous work of Boulder County and local governments within the County to determine the needs of its residents. As part of the community engagement process, local governments and their elected officials, city managers, and staff will be participating in the process as well to learn from the inputs gathered regionally in the hopes of informing jurisdictions within the county about needs and issues affecting the entire County.

### Summary of Key Outcomes and Goals

Boulder County has achieved several key outcomes since inception of its ARPA SLFRF funding, including successful implementation of the County's COVID Response Request immediate needs intake and evaluation process, as well as ongoing implementation and planning around the various ARPA administrative and regulatory requirements. Continued mid- to long-term planning around community engagement, data analysis, and other aspects of ARPA decision-making and administration will ensure long-term success of ARPA SLFRF funding.

### **ARPA Implementation**

To support the effective and compliant implementation of ARPA funds, the BOCC appointed an ARPA Administrator and approved staffing with a Program Manager, Communications Specialist, compliance staff, and a grants accountant. These staff, in consultation with an attorney from the County Attorney's Office, are closely reviewing Treasury guidance to ensure correct interpretation of guidance, compliance with federal requirements, and effective implementation. The team also is developing policies and procedures, documents, processes, file structures, project naming, communications, reporting, and other project infrastructure to effectively implement ARPA funds. Future staffing needs likely include staff with specific expertise to improve data infrastructure and capacity, including staff with will, skill, knowledge, and capacity to integrate a racial equity lens to the different implementation practice.

### **Immediate Needs Assessment and Allocations**

The COVID Response Requests funding intake process from May through July 2021 has been completed, with evaluations and final funding decisions scheduled for September. Boulder



County intends to fund near-term and immediate needs of the County and community, up to initial SLFRF amounts approved by BOCC. More on this process is described above in this document.

### **Mid- to Long-Term Planning**

As described above, Boulder County is undertaking a planning process that includes two major components. The first is a human-centered approach of community engagement beginning in August 2021 with the support of a local partner, Community Foundation of Boulder County, who will provide a consultant to facilitate and guide the engagement process. The Boulder County ARPA Community Steering Committee was formed in August 2021 and will support two phases of recommendations to the BOCC. Phase I involves a thorough community engagement process scheduled from approximately August through October 2021 in which Boulder County staff and local trusted partner agencies will gather current input (18 months into the pandemic versus other data mentioned above that was compiled previously) about where the ARPA funding should be invested.

Phase II of the community engagement process continuing into January 2022 will delve more deeply into themes identified in Phase I, identifying policies, programs, and projects that will improve outcomes for the people of Boulder County that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The goal of this planning and engagement period is to ensure that SLFRF funds are used effectively to deliver the highest level of positive and equitable impact for the community. The concept of including regionwide local government agencies in a health emergency to listen to residents and co-design solutions with community members is a tremendous opportunity for Boulder County. By presenting input from a variety of stakeholders – including an analysis of needs – and by sharing the work regionally, recommendations for the BOCC can ensure use of funds that is reflective of and responsive to residents. ARPA funding recommendations will include the central racial, economic, and health equity disparities found in Boulder County.

The second component is an analysis of existing community and stakeholder reports completed countywide by other organizations and agencies addressing COVID-19 impacts and recommendations to address the disparate impacts experienced by residents in many in the community. Given the wide range of potential SLFRF uses, Boulder County will leverage this type of expert consultation to synthesize and analyze local data and determine where gaps in information and services and programs to address COVID-19 recovery may exist. The planning consulting firm is scheduled to deliver a report to the BOCC in September 2021. This data will inform the parallel work of community engagement.

The planning consultant will deliver a report analyzing more than 50 completed reports and other resources, with information about how the pandemic has affected Boulder County, its residents, and businesses and the economy. The report will include data to inform decisions as well as provide a gap analysis on where services or programs were provided inequitably. The report will include analysis specifically related to use of SLFRF and reflecting the priorities and needs of different parts of the Boulder County community. In addition to summarizing common themes and priorities, the gap analysis also will identify information gaps where specific communities are not represented. The gap analysis can be utilized to ensure that the subsequent report captures the views of the community in an equitable and comprehensive way. The report will present data, input from a variety of stakeholders, and high-level options for



use of SLFRF funds that is reflective of and responsive to this stakeholder input, includes equity and racial equity considerations, meets BOCC policy objectives, and is compliant with federal guidelines and regulations.

### Opportunities and Challenges During the Reporting Period

Numerous opportunities and challenges have been present during the pandemic and in regard to ARPA or other federal relief funding.

#### **Opportunities:**

- *Equity Focused Community Impacts:* In particular, Boulder County looks to align its ARPA SLFRF funding towards projects that make long-term improvements in the communities it serves, while also focusing on equity and impacts on disparate communities.
- *Strategic Investments:* Boulder County is grateful for ARPA SLFRF funding in order to mitigate and respond to many of the health and economic impacts caused by the pandemic, and for the opportunity to engage community partners in its recovery efforts. The County looks forward to identifying key investment opportunities that will be the most meaningful and impactful to the community.
- *Develop Best Practices Among Peer Institutions:* The County foresees an opportunity to collaborate and develop best practices with peer institutions and other counties and municipalities throughout Colorado, as well as opportunities to leverage other direct federal funding sources available for similarly structured projects and initiatives.
- *Process and Reporting Development:* The receipt of ARPA SLFRF funding enables the County to develop new processes and procedures to properly administer ARPA funding, and develop a process infrastructure designed towards monitoring, tracking, and reporting on key performance indicators. Processes and procedures will support data gathering and tracking needs to identify that funding was invested to improve outcomes.

#### **Challenges:**

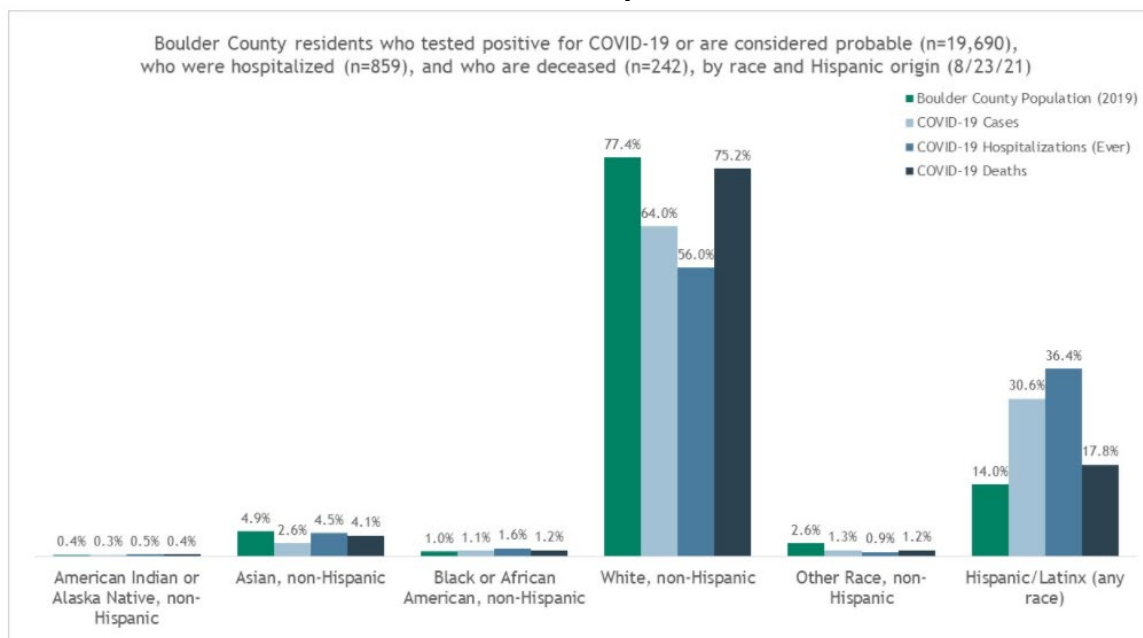
- *Ongoing Health vs. Recovery Needs Assessment:* Similar to the challenges faced nationwide, the evolving nature of COVID-19 has required Boulder County and staff to frequently switch between response vs. recovery efforts. The County continues to balance its response and recovery efforts based on the evolving risk and exposure of the COVID-19 virus and the need to always put the health and wellbeing of the community first. This requires constant internal and external operational planning, monitoring and responsiveness towards changes in positive case rates, exposure trends and risks, engaging with vulnerable populations, effective communications for containment and recovery efforts, policy and procedure adaptations, etc.
- *Disparate Impacts:* The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed long-standing inequities by race and ethnicity in the United States and Boulder County. These inequities are not natural, but are driven by long-standing policies in immigration, language access, health care access, and other historical and present policies. Black, Indigenous, and people of color experience disparate impacts in disease rates and economic hardships.



Some of the reported challenges that contribute to disparities or pose barriers in addressing them include lack of support or structure of inclusion for language access, legal limitations for remedies that take race into consideration, lack of relationship and trust between government and members of dis-invested communities, barriers for people without documentation, and lack of coordinated organizational structure for sustaining relationships with disparately impacted communities. There is a lack of racialized data to understand and measure the impacts and these challenges.

The effects of COVID-19 have caused measurable disparate public health impacts on Boulder County's Latinx community and other priority populations. For example, Latinx community members in Boulder County were disparately impacted by COVID, with disproportionate numbers of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. The work of Boulder County Public Health and others contributed to improvement over the course of the pandemic, but, as shown in the table below, most recent data show that 17 percent of Boulder County cases have been among Hispanic/Latinx community members who represent 14.0 percent of the population and 70 percent of our cases have been among white, non-Hispanic community members, who represent 77.4 percent of the population. Race/ethnicity data are known for 75.6 percent of cases.

The below chart reflects inequity in COVID-19 cases, as well as severity between White, non-Latinx and Latinx residents in Boulder County:



Additionally, Boulder County sees disparities by race and ethnicity within vaccination rates. Boulder County Public Health along with many community partners, has developed a prioritized strategy for supporting equitable vaccine access through the Vaccine Equity Coordinating Committee. That committee is prioritizing vaccine access clinics [by census tracks that have shown less vaccine uptake](#). At the time of this report, vaccination rates by age among white, non-Latinx populations ranged from 56 percent to 97 percent, while for Latinx populations they ranged from 36 percent to 81 percent vaccinated.





Disparate impacts also are found in secondary impacts, for example mental health or economic impacts. Because many Latinx community members work in the service or construction industries, and because of systemic racism, they are more likely to have lost job hours or jobs, not be able to work remotely, and experience extreme financial hardship during the pandemic.

The awareness of disparate impacts to vulnerable communities is an opportunity for the County's responsiveness and prioritized investments to eliminate inequities. National data from Johns Hopkins Essential Worker project has demonstrated that people of color are [over-represented in frontline and essential worker positions](#), which create a greater risk for exposure to COVID-19. In response, Boulder County invested CARES Act funding in two specific ways to support frontline and essential employees, including Spanish-speaking and Latinx employees. One was a county-wide campaign in English and Spanish from businesses asking community members to comply with public health orders to protect employees and business viability. The second was a project that provided employee and worker protection information along with PPE and other COVID-19 prevention materials (hand-sanitizer, etc.) directly to frontline and essential workers. This second project was created through a partnership with nonprofit and community organizations led by people of color. The contractors hired to develop the two projects were Latinx owned and operated. In addition, Boulder County supported the Latino Chamber of Boulder County with CARES Act funding to provide direct outreach to businesses on how to prevent infection and adhere to public health guidelines.

- *Adequate Staffing and Resource Needs:* Boulder County has faced other challenges during this initial SLFRF reporting period, mainly focused on County staff's ongoing burden of COVID-19 operational response needs, coupled with adequate resource availability of County staff to effectively assess, plan, implement, and respond to ARPA-related requirements. Internal County staff have been tasked with their original job responsibilities in addition to new and ongoing COVID-19 response and recovery duties, as well as new requests to manage and/or scope and define new program funding needs on behalf of ARPA SLFRF funding – all of which pose ongoing challenges to the timely and cohesive effectiveness across the organization and resilience of staff. A few new staffing resources have been brought on board (with several new staff resources requested under ARPA), but the onboarding process presents timing delays due to the recruitment, training, and coordination efforts required.
- *Data Management:* A remaining challenge centers around the availability of and need to identify consistent data and performance metrics across available health, human services, and economic programs for effective reporting. This challenge is compounded by a lack of staff capacity to analyze data. Boulder County intends to invest additional time and resources into assessing the data management needs of ARPA SLFRF funding and building capacity to meet those needs.

A lack of availability of racialized data both from the county and external sources has presented a challenge for creating data-driven solutions to address racially based disparities. SLFRF funds present an opportunity to pilot organizational structures and





processes that support data-driven practices and accountability to outcomes. Practice of disaggregating data by race has not been present across the organization to date. Integrating this practice can support a truly transformational recovery.

- *Availability and Timing of Treasury Guidance:* The County also has faced coordination challenges due to the timing, information, and guidance available by the Treasury department on behalf of ARPA SLFRF funding. For instance, the County's 2021 COVID Response and Recovery intake process was implemented in early May 2021 in an effort to provide immediate access to COVID-19 recovery funds. However full ARPA SLFRF Treasury guidance and Compliance and Reporting Guidance was not yet released by that date. Given that most counties and municipalities across the country have not been direct recipients of federal funding of this scale, and ARPA SLFRF funds come with new federal regulatory requirements specific to SLFRF funds, this creates additional effort imposed on Counties to effectively assess and evaluate the required federal regulations and procedures required under ARPA in a timely manner. These factors necessitate that each county and municipality create new and separate processes and procedures to effectively manage their own ARPA SLFRF funding, requiring additional resources and expertise to be developed within each organization. Note: prior CARES Act funding was allocated to Boulder County as a subrecipient to the State of Colorado, which required different levels of federal reporting and process requirements. Efforts to coordinate and share resources with peer counties and municipalities across the state of Colorado have been helpful, but also require additional time and coordination among multiple stakeholders.
- *Sustainability of Program Investments:* Additional challenges include the awareness that building new programs, investing in new infrastructure, and encouraging transformational change requires continued infrastructure and resource support, and adequate ongoing funding support to ensure long-term success. Boulder County's \$64M in ARPA SLFRF funding will be instrumental in helping the County with a transformational recovery process, but total ARPA SLFRF funding represents only approximately 13 percent of the County's annual budget. While these funds will be helpful towards achieving progress, ARPA SLFRF funding alone will not be adequate to ensure sustainable change. Given that federal resources are not identified beyond the County's current ARPA SLFRF allocations, these considerations will need to be factored into the County's long-term planning requirements. Where possible, the County will look for partnerships and other funding coordination efforts.



## Uses of Funds

### **Intended and Actual Uses of Funds Across Eligible Expense Categories**

- a. Public Health (EC 1)
- b. Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2)
- c. Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3)
- d. Premium Pay (EC 4)
- e. Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure (EC 5)
- f. Revenue Replacement (EC 6)\*\*
- g. Administrative Support (EC 7)

Boulder County intends to fund programs across most of the major expense categories listed above, with additional mid- to long-term community-based planning during the third and fourth quarters of 2021 needed prior to summarizing the County's full planned uses of SLFRF funding. The majority of immediate needs being evaluated for initial CRR funding fall within the primary response categories of Public Health (EC 1), Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2), and Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3), with additional Administrative Support (EC 7) services being crucial to the planning and monitoring requirements of SLFRF. Examples of longer-term funding projects may include affordable housing initiatives (EC 3) or broadband or water/sewer improvements (EC 5), among others.

The hybrid approach of implementing the immediate needs COVID Response Requests funding request process first, followed by the mid- to long-term planning and community engagement process underway beginning August 2021 enables Boulder County to be more agile and effective in its overall COVID-19 response and recovery process. This strategy helps maximize shorter-term programmatic impact and efficiency, while allowing longer term equitable outcomes to be planned for the communities, populations, and individuals throughout the jurisdiction.

**\*\*Note (EC 6):** As of July 31, 2021, a revenue replacement analysis and funding request is being evaluated by Boulder County and may be included in subsequent SLFRF periodic reporting.

### Near-Term and Immediate Needs 2021 COVID Response Requests

Boulder County's evaluation of ARPA SLFRF immediate need requests is still ongoing, with several periodic briefings provided by County staff to the BOCC during the summer 2021. Through the period of July 31, 2021, the below CRR funding requests have been approved for funding, and the respective funding status of each project is indicated. Boulder County is still evaluating approximately \$12M in additional immediate need COVID Response Requests, with additional funding decisions on those planned in September 2021. Examples of pending CRR funding requests still being evaluated include several Public Health (EC 1) immediate need requests from Boulder County Public Health (BCPH).

Approved CRR projects approved by the BOCC as of July 31, 2021 are shown in the table below:



2021 COVID RESPONSE REQUESTS					
CRR Funding Requests Approved as of 7/31/21 (Additional CRR immediate need funding requests ongoing by BOCC)					
Title of COVID Response Request	Department/Unit	STATUS	START/ PROJECTED START DATE	SLFRF EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	Approved Funding
COVID-19 REQUEST FOR FUNDING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STAFFING	Office of Financial Mngmt/County Administraors	ACTIVE	4/2021	EC 7	1,280,406
Workforce Boulder County Virtual Call Center (VCC)	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 2	370,000
Employment Services	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 2	385,000
Financial Assistance for the Family Resource Centers to support community need	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 2 (TBD)	750,000
Connecting Individuals Experiencing Homelessness with Services	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 3	21,600
Support for a Successful Implementation of the Emergency Choice Vouchers	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 3	120,000
Juvenile Assessment Center extension of COVID FTE term positions	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 1	130,084
Left Behind Workers Fund Extended Support	Community Services	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 2	300,000
ARPA Planning Contractor	Commissioner's Office	APPROVED	*8/2021	EC 7	100,000
					<b>3,457,090</b>

*\*Note: Retroactive activity (if applicable) incurred prior to 8/1/21 but within authorized ARPA SLFRF funding periods will be evaluated for approval and any retroactive obligations (if any) will be verified and reflected within subsequent SLFRF report(s) as needed.*

### Mid- to Long-Term COVID-19 Response and Recovery Planning

Boulder County's planned community engagement period and consulting partnerships during the third and fourth quarters of 2021 will provide additional input from multiple internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the balance of SLFRF funds are used effectively to deliver the highest level of positive and equitable support for the communities, populations, and individual needs of the jurisdiction.

This mid- to long-term planning period also provides additional time to assess and coordinate between other jurisdictions and ARPA or federal recovery funds available such as direct federal funding towards Emergency Rental Assistance, State of Colorado ARPA and other funding, and/or other health economic and infrastructure funding available. This will enable the County to coordinate and leverage these multiple sources of funding to achieve the greatest long-term impact(s) to its respective communities.

### Other Federal Recovery Funds: Emergency Rental Assistance

Boulder County's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) launched at the beginning of March 2021 to provide emergency rental and utility assistance and arrears under the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Emergency Rental Assistance program. These funds are used to provide, for a limited term of 15 to 18 months, safe and stable housing assistance that may include rental assistance, security deposits, utility assistance, and other reasonable fees to



assist households that are experiencing economic hardship and housing insecurity or homelessness.

Boulder County was allocated \$9,816,678.90 under ERA's first round of funding (ERA1) from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 for use through September 2022 and \$7,767,478.90 under the second round from the American Rescue Plan Act (ERA2) along with \$4,604,451.20 designated for high needs in that second round for use through September 2025, for a total of \$22,188,609 in funding. To date, Boulder County has expended approximately \$3M in funding and has assisted more than 540 households at the time of this report.



## Promoting Equitable Outcomes

### Current and Intended Outcomes to Promote Equity

Boulder County has a commitment to promoting and practicing racial equity. In August 2021, the Boulder County Commissioners announced the creation of the Office of Racial Equity, tripling the budget and staffing for internal racial equity work at Boulder County. The initial focus of this team will be to help Boulder County support strategy, tools, and curriculum to advance racial equity internally. The additional budget and staffing will help Boulder County continue to build a strong internal foundation to support the challenging and ongoing work of evolving government practices and programs to be more racially equitable.

The BOCC previously made a public statement in early 2021 in support of President Biden's executive order on Advancing Racial Equity. The commitment to racial equity also has been demonstrated in the past work of the Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Advisory Committee to develop of CRI Road Map for the organization, as well as in current equity work arising from County pandemic response efforts through collaborative cross-organizational groups, Forward Together Safely and later PRRO BoCo Racial Equity Team. This work is described in greater detail below.

Boulder County utilizes several principles and strategies to prioritize equity and disparate population groups in the pandemic response. PRRO BoCo strategic planning adopts a framework grounded in addressing the needs of priority populations, using a theory of change that suggests that by focusing on the well-being of those groups, the County will best advance containment and recovery, and meet the needs of the community.

Across the Denver-metro area, the state, and the nation, segments of the population have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. These priority populations are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to living conditions, work circumstances, underlying health conditions, and access to care. Priority populations may also be disproportionately impacted by the economic effects of the pandemic, which exasperate disparate impacts can affect physical and mental health.

Priority populations include people harmed by historical policies such as structural racism and who are disproportionately affected by COVID-19. They also may be under-resourced (unable to self-isolate, lack personal protective equipment, lack childcare, access to resources, etc.). These include communities of color, communities with high concentrations of poverty, people working in essential services, and people living in congregate settings.

Through the planning processes and continued collaboration with the Racial Equity Team and other groups described in greater detail elsewhere in this Report, Boulder County will clarify intended outcomes to promote equity with ARPA funds more specifically.

### Boulder County's Commitment to Racial Equity

On August 4, 2020, Boulder County adopted a personnel Conditions of Employment and Code of Conduct policy titled, "Fully Inclusive, Anti-Racist & Multicultural Organization," demonstrating the County's commitment to racial equity as a government organization. That policy is as follows.



“In Boulder County, race matters. We center race in our equity work because we know historically and currently, race is the biggest predictor of disproportionate outcomes and disparities in the United States of America. Good government is impossible without racial equity. In 2018, the Board of County Commissioners with the full support of County and racial equity leadership, made transformational racial equity one of the county’s strategic priorities.

The future vision of this institution is one that has overcome systemic racism and all other forms of oppression. The recognition of the impact of racism on the need for intentional efforts toward eliminating racism is foundational to transformational equity work. To that end, Boulder County’s institution of government will reflect full participation and shared power with diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups in determining its mission, structure, constituency, policies, and practices. A place where members of all identity groups are full participants in decisions that shape the institution for full inclusion of diverse races, cultures, lifestyles, and interests.

The result is healing within the workplace and employees; a place of alliance in combating all forms of social oppression. A Boulder County where we humbly work with larger communities (regional, national, global) to eliminate all forms of oppression and assist in creating fully inclusive, anti-racist and multicultural organizations everywhere.

Everyone’s humanity in the institution and community matters. For everyone’s humanity to matter, first the organization and persons within it must recognize that historically and currently, anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity is causing harm. Sincere efforts must be made to identify, stop and repair the harm.

Everyone in Boulder County government shares a responsibility to actively contribute to the liberation of all people, especially those who have been historically and structurally marginalized and oppressed.

As a government institution, it is our moral responsibility to interrupt institutional racism which manifests through racist laws, policies, practices and behaviors. In order to advance racial equity, we must practice transformational racial equity within our own governmental organization and within ourselves.

It is the responsibility of all County department directors and elected officials to ensure with integrity and fidelity that this policy is articulated to each employee within their supervision. It is expected that all employees endeavor to develop the will, knowledge, skill and capacity consistent with this policy. It is expected that everyone practices and exhibits transformational racial equity with honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness as we build for eternity.”

Additional actions and activities reveal a tangible commitment to racial equity in years prior to the adoption of that policy. On January 27, 2021, the Boulder County Commissioners issued the following statement in support of President Biden’s executive order on Advancing Racial Equity, which is included here below.

[Statement from the Boulder County Commissioners in support of the President’s executive order on Advancing Racial Equity - Boulder County](#)





“On Jan. 20, 2021, President Biden signed an *Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*. This [order](#) aims at increasing racial equity across the U.S. by strengthening anti-discrimination housing policies, halting new Justice Department contracts with private prisons, increasing the sovereignty of Native American tribes, and combatting violence and xenophobia against Asian Americans and Pacific islanders. As the order further states, *Affirmatively advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the whole of our Government*.

Boulder County supports this action in advancing racial equity and the executive order’s mandate to provide the necessary federal resources to advance fairness and opportunity. Boulder County centers race in its own approach to increasing equity at in the County. As a public organization serving more than 326,000 county residents, Boulder County has identified five key [strategic priority areas](#) that help guide its public efforts, including Affordable Living, Climate Action, **Equity & Justice**, Land & Water Stewardship, and Organizational & Financial Stewardship. Particular to this matter, the County’s Equity & Justice strategic priority is incorporated into daily County operations and ongoing strategic planning. Additionally, the County has established an internal Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion (CRI) Road Map that directs Boulder County employees to incorporate racial equity into all aspects of county work, which includes imbedding CRI within five priority areas of: Accountability, Leadership, Policy and Sustainability, Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Training. Boulder County is also a core member of GARE ([Government Alliance on Race & Equity](#)) and is in a partnership with [Pacific Educational Group](#) for individual, institutional and structural transformation to achieve racial equity and eradicate all inequities for marginalized groups.

#### [Boulder County, CO | Government Alliance on Race and Equity \(\[racialequityalliance.org\]\(https://racialequityalliance.org\)\)](#)

Boulder County’s Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and members of Boulder County’s Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Committee (CRIAC) have identified major milestones to improving equity, diversity, and inclusion over time at the organization. From 2014 to 2016, a diverse leadership board of employees supportive of and with expertise in cultural responsiveness and inclusion developed a mission, vision, and concrete goals and objectives for increasing cultural responsiveness and inclusion at Boulder County. These goals and objectives are defined in the Boulder County Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Roadmap which was adopted by the BOCC in 2016.

As part of the BOCC’s 2019-2024 strategic priorities, the BOCC is re-emphasizing its support and investment in this roadmap and those implementing the roadmap. As significant progress has been made in implementing the roadmap and lessons have been learned, updates and revisions will be made as necessary to continue improvement in realizing equity, as prioritized by the Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, and BOCC. Boulder County’s racial equity objectives include:

- *Objective 1a:* Ensure accountability for supporting and sustaining equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion.
- *Objective 1b:* Ensure leadership within the Boulder County organization has the tools and resources to support and sustain equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion efforts.
- *Objective 1c:* Ensure policy supports and sustains equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion and efforts are sustainable over time.

- *Objective 1d:* Ensure recruitment, hiring, and retention activities within the organization support and sustain equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion.
- *Objective 1e:* Ensure Boulder County employees have the training and tools they need to support and sustain equity, cultural responsiveness, and inclusion activities, including training to address oppression”

### PRRO BoCo Racial Equity Team

Racial equity has been a key component within Boulder County’s COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery efforts, incorporated first within its Forward Together Safely (FTS) initiative as well as its PRRO BoCo organizational structure. The County’s ongoing pandemic strategies have centered racial equity as a fundamental goal of these initiatives via focused internal organization. The Racial Equity Team was assembled with the collaboration from key contributors that include: Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and non-People of Color who are identified as racial equity leaders in Boulder County. In April of 2020, the Racial Equity Team assembled to direct its efforts in a pilot to center race and racial equity in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the Racial Equity Team has a two-pronged approach:

1. Provide critical attention to addressing the racial and ethnic disparities during the pandemic (which acknowledges/includes the intersectionality of marginalized identities, for example LGBTQ+, ability, immigration status, age, etc.), and maintain high level view to incorporate equity practices and approaches.
2. Create long-lasting programs, practices and processes in a small sample environment, such as FTS. By piloting racial equity within the programs and practices of FTS, the County will have the organizing approach to scale up racial equity throughout the County that can be embedded within departments and offices and bridge the work of the County as it moves out of pandemic response into recovery.



As a primary advisory group represented within the PRRO BoCo structure, the Racial Equity Team works to advance racial equity issues in Boulder County through monitoring, planning and implementation; teaching and learning; and addressing structural racism within Boulder County. Objectives of the Racial Equity Team include: advancing a culture of racial equity within the agency and strengthening the will, skill and knowledge of County staff to advance health and racial equity within its COVID-19 response; identifying

and supporting data that incorporate a racial equity lens, including disaggregation of data, use of qualitative data, etc.; and providing tools and forums for review of pandemic response and recovery plans and implementation activities through a racial equity lens.

To transform individual and institutional practices and advance racial equity in FTS/PRRO BoCo, the focus areas of and the function of the Racial Equity Team identified three key areas of their work:

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Key Partnerships
3. Advocacy



These key focus areas and function of the Racial Equity Team include:

1. Teaching & Learning: The Teaching and Learning focus area encompasses Racial Equity Panels and Racial Equity Open Hours.

### **Racial Equity Panels & Racial Equity Assessment Tool**

As FTS/PRRO BoCo teams create projects to address the pandemic, they utilize the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool as part of their analysis. The purpose of this tool is to consider the racial impact the project may have on others.

Racial Equity Panels were created to work in concert with the application of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool. Racial Equity Practitioners provide feedback from multiple perspectives from a racially diverse and racially conscious community of County Racial Equity Practitioners. It is an intentionally designed strategy to combat the exclusion and tokenism practiced in everyday decision-making.

Structured feedback to the application of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool is offered in the form of strengths, things to consider, and questions for reflections as it relates to problem statements or problems of practice. The intended outcomes of FTS/PRRO BoCo projects identify how projects define and envision racially equitable outcomes and how the proposal advances racial equity.

The Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool guides the user to utilize any racialized data or other data and asks if the community voice was heard and where they engaged to create the project.

### **Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool questions include:**

1. WHO PARTICIPATED IN COMPLETING THIS ANALYSIS (NAMES, DEPARTMENTS) IF YOU ARE IN AN FTS TEAM, NAME THE TEAM? PLEASE SHARE HOW THE PARTICIPANTS RACIALLY IDENTIFY.
2. WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM STATEMENT OR PROBLEM OF PRACTICE?
3. WHAT IS THE DECISION (SOLUTION) UNDER CONSIDERATION? PLEASE DESCRIBE BRIEFLY.
4. WHAT ARE THE INTENDED OUTCOMES OF YOUR PROPOSAL? HOW COULD YOU DEFINE OR ENVISION RACIALLY EQUITABLE OUTCOMES RELATED TO THIS PROPOSAL? HOW COULD THIS PROPOSAL ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY?
5. WHAT DOES THE DATA TELL YOU? DID YOU RACIALIZE DATA IN YOUR ANALYSIS? Y/N? WHY?
6. HAVE COMMUNITY VOICES BEEN HEARD? IF SO, WHO IN THE COMMUNITY WAS ENGAGED? WHAT WAS THEIR INPUT?
7. WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS DECISION?
8. WHO WILL BE BURDENED BY THIS DECISION?
9. ARE THERE STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE ANY UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DECISION?
10. WHAT IS THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN?
11. HOW WILL WE ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY, COMMUNICATE AND EVALUATE RESULTS?

The flow and use of the **Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool** follows this format:



Examples of programs utilizing the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool, and reviewed by the Racial Equity Panel include:

- Pandemic work equipment support program
- Human Services Housing Helpline
- Workforce LEARNS interest form
- Short Term Dwelling rental code update
- Nonprofit Emergency Relief Fund
- Small Business grant program
- Telework Policy
- BCPH submission on scope of work
- FTS Operation Team Tier 1 & 2 survey highlights

Projects approved through the CRR process as well as later projects will be required to identify measurable equity outcomes and goals, in co-creation with the Racial Equity Panel, by completing the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and meeting with the Racial Equity Panel, or a similar and meaningful means. Policies and procedures around this are being developed in partnership by the ARPA team and Racial Equity Team.

### **Open Hours (Racial Equity Mondays)**

The second focus area of Teaching and Learning sessions are open hours which was later adapted into “Racial Equity Mondays,” a space for conversations about race, to practice the use of the Courageous Conversation About Race (CCAR) protocol, to bring problems of practice, listen to multiple perspectives, to reflect, and to learn from each other. The sessions provide an opportunity to center race in the discussion, reflect on problems of practice, bring to light different issues that have come to the surface in the pandemic response, practice or ask questions about the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and create the conditions to move the discussion or problem statement to the application of the racial equity assessment tool in the development of projects.



Some examples of conversations and problems of practice that were brought to open hours:

- What does it mean to be a Latinx in Boulder County?
- The impact of COVID-19 in the Latinx community
- Allyship & Antiracism
- The Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool: what, why, who, how, when, and where
- Senge's iceberg
- Critical Race Theory
- Ladder of Inference
- Intersectionality
- Racial autobiographies

Both of the teaching and learning session have been iteratively incorporated into Racial Equity Mondays.

2. Key Partnerships: The Racial Equity Team creates collaboration for transformational racial equity by building relationships both internally and externally to the organization. This ensures multiple perspectives to co-create future opportunities. During the FTS/PRRO BoCo Pandemic Response this involved monthly meetings with other teams in the FTS structure. The Racial Equity Team co-leads developed partnership and collaborated with the Community Engagement Team, Housing and Human Services, Operations, Sustainability Team, Data Stakeholder Group, IT, and Economic Vitality. The Racial Equity leads also had weekly meetings with the FTS/PRRO BoCo coordinator to coordinate the racial equity team efforts with the other FTS/PRRO BoCo teams. As a result of these meetings, FTS/PRRO BoCo teams began integrating a racial equity lens as part of their projects before it came to a racial equity panel, or the collaboration helps shape their policies and approach to their work.

The collaboration with the Community Engagement Team identified the will to have members from the Community Task Force participate in a Courageous Conversation About Race training. The Sustainability team included the need for racialized data as part of the Telework Policy that was being developed and later was reviewed at a Racial Equity Panel for additional feedback. The Housing and Human Services Team became early adopters of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool for their projects and developed the will to look at all of their programs through the tool. The Operations Team was also an early adopter of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and began the preliminary discussions of the listening sessions as a mental health check-in for County Staff. Discussions with IT centered around the use of the Racial Equity Tool within the Business Plan IT application. The collaboration with the Communication Team and PIOs developed messaging on promoting Racial Equity Open Hours and now called Racial Equity Mondays, Racial Equity Panels, the Racial Equity Guidebook, and the development of the Racial Equity Team's website. The collaboration produced video demonstrations on the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and created self-learning modules for county staff.

Another partnership example the Racial Equity Team created was applying for CARES Act funding to create an RFP to develop a qualitative study on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Latinx community. The Trestle Group was selected to do this work, and in 2020 the Trestle report was produced after interviewing more than 115 community members within the Latinx community. The report highlighted the impacts of COVID-19 with the disproportional job loss in the service and construction industry, sources of emergency assistance, information sources on COVID, mental health issues, health resources available, and the impact the "public charge" of





the federal government had on residents that are undocumented. These key partnerships are fundamental components of the Racial Equity Teams work. See information from Trestle's COVID-19 Qualitative Impact Study Final Report below.

3. Advocacy: Advancing racial equity within the program and building and strengthening the will, skill, knowledge, and capacity of County staff to advance health and racial equity within its COVID-19 response is the ongoing key advocacy for the Racial Equity Team. Using the plan-do-study-act methodology of improvement science, principles of adaptive leadership, and a transformational racial equity systems framework the racial equity team launched a centralized effort to center race within the FTS/PRRO BoCo team structure.

This effort contributes most directly to the value of inclusion, as it specifically advances the BOCC Strategic Priority area of Equity and Justice to elevate racial consciousness in employees and create new habits of mind in order to achieve the vision of Boulder County becoming an all-inclusive, multicultural, anti-racist organization. However, as interconnectedness and interdependency are essential to a thriving ecosystem, this effort simultaneously elevates the guiding values of service, sustainability, innovation, resilience, and engagement.

Another focus of advocacy for the team is around data for reflection and decision-making that incorporates a racial equity lens, including disaggregation of racial data and the use of qualitative data which was supported by the work of the Trestle Group. Quantitative data involved the collaboration with the data stakeholder group to develop the Open Gov pilot project for dashboard data assessment. The dashboard data assessment will include quantitative data of community indicators from economic vitality, public health, and human services, and is still in development.

#### [Racial Equity Team Involvement within CARES and ARPA Funding Requests](#)

The Racial Equity Team reviewed unmet needs project requests submitted in 2020 by the Economic Vitality Team as part of the County's pandemic response and provided a racial equity lens to the funds requested by businesses in Boulder County. Several projects addressed a reduction of services and staff in the service industries that included lodging, farming, retail stores, and manufacturing. During the constructed feedback through the Racial Equity Panels, several projects from the FTS teams had a positive impact in responding to the economic downturn such as pandemic work equipment support program, Housing and Human Services Housing Helpline, the nonprofit Emergency Relief Fund and Telework Policy. The Economic Vitality Team also incorporated the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool as part of the application process for the CARES Act funding.

Integration of Racial Equity Team reviews and the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool has continued within the County's current ARPA SLFRF funding plans. As part of the 2021 COVID Response Requests funding request process, all funding requestors were asked intake questions related to how project requests addressed equity considerations, and requestors were encouraged to review their programs with the Racial Equity Team. In addition, CRR awardees will be required to identify measurable equity outcomes and goals, in co-creation with the Racial Equity Panel, by completing the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and meeting with the Racial Equity Panel, or a similar and meaningful means, which is being determined by the ARPA team and Racial Equity Team. This is aimed at operationalizing the consideration of racial equality factors by applicants within their respective program(s).





The CRR immediate need funding request process also incorporates several additional equity evaluation components, including the following review criteria used as part of the overall CRR assessment and evaluation process.

### **CRR Evaluation Team Evaluation Criteria**

#### **Advancement of Racial, Health, and/or Economic Equity, with Consideration of Examples from PRRO BoCo Strategic Plan Objectives:**

1. Improves service outreach, access, and / or measurable outcomes for those most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
2. Decreases systemic barriers to health and economic opportunities
3. Supports data that incorporate a racial equity lens, including disaggregation of data, use of qualitative data, etc.
4. Provides tools and forum for review plans and implementation activities through a racial equity lens
5. Advances a culture of racial equity and strengthens the will, skill and knowledge of County staff to advance health and racial equity
6. Internally elevates and activates community feedback from Community Task Force and Resource Coordinator activities to improve the effectiveness of Boulder County services, communication, outreach, and delivery to mitigate the disparate impacts of COVID-19

### **Results/Success of Boulder County's Racial Equity Program**

The Racial Equity Team's goal of develop, implement, iterate, and evaluate racial equity practices in the areas of teaching and learning, key partnership, and advocacy has created a community of practice within the County that normalizes, organizes and operationalizes racial equity work in Boulder County, in particular using the Government Alliance for Racial Equity Framework. In what was initially a piloted program within the County's pandemic response, racial equity efforts expanded into other departments and offices within the County. The use of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool has moved from a onetime use to incorporating the principles and planning tools within many FTS teams, and in the County's longer-term pandemic response and recovery efforts. For example, Human Resources has integrated the tool as part of their assessment for hiring, recruitment and retention work.

The process of the Racial Equity Panels has planted the seeds for integrated feedback and listening to multiple perspectives. The teaching and learning sessions along with the other multiple racial equity trainings have created the conditions for the deep personal introspection of critical reflection to engage in transformational racial equity work, working from the Courageous Conversation About Race Framework from Glenn Singleton. The project has provided team conversations on racial equity and space for a problem of practice as it relates to several FTS/PRRO BoCo projects. The project has centered race in every question to advance racial equity, eliminating disproportional outcomes based on race and lifting outcomes for all groups.

Centering the importance of using existing data disaggregated by race and ethnicity to inform projects and analysis of strategies and throughout this process has been iterative, with a continuous improvement cycle that creates work projects that are reviewed, improved upon, and re-executed. This approach, along with the use of adaptive leadership by using the Practices of Adaptive Leadership, from Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, creates adaptive challenges that are addressed through changes in beliefs, habits, and priorities.



A few examples of what the Racial Equity Team in FTS/PRRO BoCo has achieved to advance racial equity:

- Created a user-friendly SharePoint website for racial equity, with resources including authoring a Racial Equity Guidebook.
- Created the Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool.
- Created and implemented the process of Racial Equity Panels where FTS teams and beyond share their completed Racial Equity Impact Assessment Tool and collectively engage in the practice of receiving structured feedback and healthy racial dialogue.
- Created and implemented the structure of Racial Equity Team Open Hours (now called Racial Equity Mondays), a space for teaching and learning, curiosities to be surfaced, information to be shared & discussed, all centering race and practicing healthy racial dialogue.
- Provided the opportunity to all FTS/PRRO BoCo teams to participate in the foundational class “Introduction to Courageous Conversations about Race” led by a professional facilitator from partner organization, Pacific Educational Group. Approximately two-thirds of FTS employees participated. Many FTS team members also took advantage of differentiated offerings in the Academy for Courageous Conversation.
- Provided opportunity for FTS/PRRO BoCo team members to voluntarily attend the LatinX Summit for Courageous Conversations about Race. Approximately 30 employees attended at no cost to their departments.

This racial equity work recognizes that systemic racism is not a technical problem that can be solved with a technical solution. Sustainable racial equity approaches are transformational and not transactional. Change is a process and not an event.

### What does it mean to take a “transformational” approach?

<b>Transactional Approach</b>	<b>Transformational Approach</b>
Solves technical problems	Solves an adaptive problem
Problem is easy to identify	Problem is easy to deny (under the surface)
Routine solution using skills and experience readily available	Requires change in values, beliefs, roles, relationships, and structure of operations
Often solved by an authority or expert	People facing the problem are involved in the work of solving it
Requires change in just one or a few places, contained within organizational boundaries	Requires change across organizational boundaries
People tend to be receptive to the technical solution	People tend to avoid (or push back on) addressing the adaptive challenge
Solution can often be implemented quickly, sometimes by edict	Transformation requires experiments and new discoveries, takes a long time to implement, cannot be implemented by edict
Produces short-term gains for communities, but leaves the existing structure in place	Shifts cultural values and political will to create racial equity

Excerpted from, GARE Resource Guide, *Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government*



This racial equity project continues to address the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and advancing racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in Boulder County. The project has successfully implemented a community of practice within the county to engage employees in racial equity dialogues, teachings, and learnings, and forward the development of FTS/PRRO BoCo projects to address the pandemic with a racial equity lens. This pilot project scaled up the importance of centering race throughout the pandemic while addressing long-term structural racism. The project focused on creating long-lasting programs, practices, and processes in a small sample environment, such as FTS/PRRO BoCo, for which this studied infrastructure can be scaled up incrementally and especially once the county moves out of pandemic response into recovery.

What has been created through this pilot program is the normalization of racial equity work in Boulder County. This is no small feat when for years race has been at play and on the table but rarely intentionally discussed in the role that it plays in perpetuating inequities in government policies and regulations. This has not before been done in Boulder County government in a dedicated way, and efforts continue to move the work forward.

### Measurement of Equity Outcomes within CARES and ARPA SLFRF Program(s)

Boulder County has applied an equity lens when consideration of projects to be funded. —The ARPA team is collaborating with the racial equity team to define overarching and project-specific racial, health, and economic outcomes, as well as effective ways to measure and track measurable goals and success outcomes. The information below summarizes efforts-to-date, along with detailed analysis and planning efforts currently underway to be reflected in subsequent ARPA SLFRF reports.

**Goals:** Are there particular historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups that you intend to serve?

The Metro Denver Partnership for Health (MDPH) Containment Work Group identified the eight priority populations below that are at greater risk for COVID-19 infection, which the County has adopted for this plan. Boulder County Public Health used this framework to develop all of their containment and mitigation responses, from communications to hiring (bilingual/bicultural), case and vaccination reporting (disaggregated by race/ethnicity and age, long-term care facilities, jails and congregate housing, geo-coded by census tract, and more), outreach and communications (language, cultural appropriateness, locating testing sites, targeting door-to-door outreach to high vulnerability census tracts), resource navigation support, support to unhoused for isolation and quarantine when they test positive, and other strategies and practices.

The MDPH includes Boulder County Public Health, the City and County of Broomfield, Denver Public Health and Environment, Denver Public Health, Jefferson County Public Health, and Tri-County Health Department. In a June 2020 report titled “COVID-19 Public Health Strategies for Priority Populations,” these populations were identified as priority populations, with the acknowledgement that systemic racism exists, and that race intersects with all of these groups.

1. People who are unhoused.
2. People who are detained or incarcerated (jails, prisons, and detention facilities).
3. People in long-term care, assisted living facilities, and supportive living environments such as group homes.



4. Young children and families with young children.
5. Medically vulnerable (people over age 65, isolated seniors, people with intellectual and physical disabilities requiring support with activities of daily living, people with chronic conditions and immunocompromised health status, and people with complex behavioral health needs).
6. New Americans (immigrants, refugees, migrant agricultural workers, and people without documentation).
7. Colorado Tribes and Tribal Organizations (including Coloradans from all tribes).
8. People who work in essential industries who may have dangerous job conditions and low wages and lack adequate protections and supports such as personal protective equipment and sick leave.

In addition, Boulder County continues to recognize that the impacts of COVID-19 have disproportionately impacted its Latinx community. Boulder County's mid- to long-term SLFRF planning aims to incorporate strategies to positively impact priority populations, while being responsive to the evolving health and economic recovery needs of the community at large.

### **COVID-19 Qualitative Impact Study on Latinx Community in Boulder County**

In January 2021, Trestle Strategy Group conducted a qualitative study on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Latinx community in Boulder County. The study was commissioned by the Boulder County Office of County Administrator for the County's Forward Together Safely COVID-19 response team, and made possible by CARES funding. In the following excerpt from the aforementioned report, "the study findings show that the Latinx community has been suffering [and disparately impacted] in many ways throughout the COVID-19 crisis:

- Because many members of the Latinx community work in the service or construction industries, and because of systemic inequalities, they are more likely to have lost job hours or jobs, not be able to work remotely, and experience extreme financial hardship.
- The main financial support source that was named is the Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA), which provided rent relief for up to three months to some families.
- Most interviewees said that they were staying informed on the COVID-19 pandemic through Latinx media such as Telemundo or Univision, the Boulder County SUMA Facebook page, and the school districts' communications (BVSD, SVVSD).
- Although "mental health" is not a terminology that Latinx acknowledge, most of the interviewees said they have been suffering from anxiety, stress, or even depression, partly due to their financial situation, larger families in smaller accommodations, online school, and a sense of isolation that the stay-at-home order and fear of COVID-19 have provoked.
- Most of the interviewees mentioned the People's Clinic as their go-to place when seeking COVID-19 testing or treatment; however there seems to be a stigma in the community around divulging a positive COVID-19 test result, by fear of not being able to work anymore, having to seek support services, or immigration backlash.
- This last point brings us to the fear of public charge, which is probably the most consequential underlying issue preventing community members from accessing services available throughout the County. The "public charge" rule determines the factors that can be used to deny immigrants permanent residency status



(generally known as green cards). The administration's new rule added the use of public programs like Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP - food stamps), and subsidized housing, in addition to overall health status, to be reasons for denying an immigrant a green card. During our interviews, it became clear that this policy is causing immigrant families to avoid seeking medical care during the pandemic although the Trump administration amended the public charge rule to clarify that seeking care for COVID-19-like symptoms will not be considered in an individual's assessment, though enrolling in Medicaid and other public services like SNAP may still be used, halting enforcement of the new public charge rule during the pandemic."

**Awareness:** How equal and practical is the ability for residents or businesses to become aware of the services funded by the SLFRF?

Programs and services funded with ARPA funds will be designed with consideration for how residents and businesses can be made aware of these programs and services. During CARES Act funding and the ARPA CRR process, the need for and/or availability of programs and services were communicated through county staff, cultural brokers, and community partners that work directly with underserved and disproportionately impacted communities. In addition, each approved project selected for SLFRF funding will be asked to identify data and program design elements, such as the project's communication and implementation strategies implemented to best reach target audiences and help facilitate equitable access to services.

Boulder County's mid- to long-term planning phase intends to communicate and engage with residents and businesses across Boulder County in planning around ARPA funds through multiple processes such as ARPA town hall discussions, community outreach, and working with staff and partners such as the Cultural Brokers and Family Resource Center liaisons. Past experience and the planning process will help identify and be prepared to provide targeted outreach opportunities to diverse community members.

A bilingual and bicultural communications specialist will begin work with the ARPA team in August 2021. This position will be tasked with creating a communications plan and executing on that plan, including both internal and external communications as well as strategies and tactics for reaching underserved and hard-to-reach communities. Methods of communication will be diverse and responsive to different communities' needs, communication channels, and preferred methods of communication.

**Access and Distribution:** Are there differences in levels of access to benefits and services across groups? Are there administrative requirements that result in disparities in ability to complete applications or meet eligibility criteria?

Programs and services funded with ARPA funds will be designed with consideration for promoting access and removing barriers and administrative burdens. Barriers and opportunities to improve access also likely will be identified in the mid- to long-term planning process. In the administration of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance funds, Boulder County has ensured access by allowing for submittal of applications through various means, including electronic or





by phone for people lacking access, and applicants also can work through community partners such as the Family Resource Centers to access assistance.

Tools to better serve Boulder County's Latinx community have been developed such as the 2021 Latinx COVID-19 Information Tool Kit. This resource guide includes additional information available to this priority population, such as: Addressing Barriers of Priority Populations, Resources for People Experiencing Barriers, Outreach Resources Available, and more. [2021-covid-tool-kit-latinx-eng.pdf \(bouldercounty.org\)](https://bouldercounty.org/government/budget-and-finance/american-rescue-plan-act-arpa/) Boulder County also will have an external ARPA webpage to provide information and link to other resources at <https://bouldercounty.org/government/budget-and-finance/american-rescue-plan-act-arpa/>.

**Outcomes:** Are intended outcomes focused on closing gaps, reaching universal levels of service, or disaggregating progress by race, ethnicity, and other equity dimensions where relevant for the policy objective?

The planning and community engagement process will facilitate the definition or refinement of intended outcomes to be achieved with ARPA funds. This clarity will enable Boulder County to design and implement its long-term transformational recovery plan with an emphasis on equity outcomes

Efforts to date to address immediate needs have applied the filters of consideration of CRR evaluation criteria that center equity and access and are, informed by PRRO BoCo strategic goals. Restated here, those criteria goals are as follows:

1. Improves service outreach, access, and / or measurable outcomes for those most disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
2. Decreases systemic barriers to health and economic opportunities
3. Supports data that incorporate a racial equity lens, including disaggregation of data, use of qualitative data, etc.
4. Provides tools and forum for review plans and implementation activities through a racial equity lens
5. Advances a culture of racial equity and strengthens the will, skill and knowledge of County staff to advance health and racial equity
6. Internally elevates and activates community feedback from Community Task Force and Resource Coordinator activities to improve the effectiveness of Boulder County services, communication, outreach, and delivery to mitigate the disparate impacts of COVID-19

In addition to the County's overall recovery strategies described above which are intended to emphasize equitable outcomes, all individual CRR SLFRF-approved projects may be asked to assess and disclose similar program measures, based on each specific SLFRF program design. Questions may include identifying program Goals, Awareness, Access and Distribution, and Intended Outcomes of each project and funding recipient. This information will be used to determine potential program design approaches that may be standardized or utilized across similar programs or demographic populations.

#### **Boulder County's Equity-Based Current and Planned Use of Funds, per Category**

During the CRR immediate needs process, projects were reviewed for equity, as described above, and focused on responding to time-sensitive service needs of the community. Through the planning process and collaboration with the Racial Equity Team, community members, and others, Boulder County will refine and clarify how ARPA SLFRF funds prioritize economic and





racial equity as a goal, naming specific targets to produce meaningful equity results at scale and articulating the strategies to achieve those targets. Through that process, approximately 45 reports, data sets, and analyses will be synthesized and analyzed with an equity lens. Coupled with the community engagement process, it is anticipated that insight will be gained to inform the definition of equity goals, targets, and strategies with respect to ARPA SLFRF funds.

### **Negative Economic Impacts (EC 2):**

Initial projects approved during the CRR process that provide a positive economic impact have focused on employment services and other direct community economic relief facilitated by local non-profits and Family Resource Centers, including:

- Employment services and staffing resources provided to Workforce Boulder County (WBC) and Workforce Boulder County Virtual Call Center (VCC).
- Assistance to local Family Resource Centers including OUR Center, Sister Carmen Community Center, and Emergency Family Assistance Association.
- Additional assistance provided to Impact Charitable and El Centro Amistad to respond to the needs of Left Behind Workers in Boulder County.

### **Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities (EC 3):**

Initial projects approved during the CRR process that are targeted to disproportionately impacted communities include provide financial housing assistance and digital access resources to Boulder County's homeless population, including:

- Case management support to help facilitate Move On protocols and HUD Emergency Choice Vouchers to eligible Public Housing Authorities.
- Digital services such as flip phones, tablets, and internet access provided to Mountain communities facing homelessness, to facilitate access to health and other economic services.



## Community Engagement

During the COVID Response Request process, the PRRO BoCo Human Services Support Team (HSST), made up of representatives from the Housing and Human Services and Community Services departments, as well as the representatives from the Community Engagement and Resource Navigation group (CERN), worked together to assess community needs and submit near-term and immediate-need funding requests. Immediate needs were determined through community engagement with partner organizations, cultural brokers, and direct services.

As described above, the BOCC also is undertaking a planning process to synthesize community and stakeholder feedback and other data and identify gaps in feedback or data, as well as a community engagement process. More than 50 reports, data sources, or other input sources will be analyzed through the planning process. A BOCC ARPA Town Hall is scheduled for September 9<sup>th</sup>, and a deeper, intentional, and human-centered community engagement process will occur beginning in August.

## Community-Focused Planning

The Community Foundation of Boulder County, as a partner agency, has provided Rebuild by Design as a facilitator to guide and co-create an engagement process built in collaboration with community organizations. The Boulder County ARPA Community Steering Committee has been formed and is composed of multi-racial, multilingual, cross-sector representatives who are all committed to include community voice from those not typically invited to participate in the public process.

The first stage of this process is about developing a deep understanding of the challenge. Through combined expertise, this group will build a strong understanding of the lingering challenges among community members who suffered from COVID-19 in disparate ways due to racial, health, and economic inequalities. The outreach phase of this first stage will focus on conducting community outreach through grass-tips leaders using workshops, thematic conversations, one-on-one meetings, municipal outreach, and other methods. This effort will draw input from stakeholders across the County, with a priority for geographically, racially, or economically underrepresented groups. The second stage involves designing priority projects, programs, and policies by applying the understanding learned in the previous stage, going deeper into the selected theme(s) and testing policies, programs, and projects with stakeholders.

The purpose of the community engagement process is to ensure that the BOCC hears from community members who suffered in disparate ways due to racial, health, and economic inequalities. The goal is to understand how Boulder County can mitigate the effects of COVID on the entire community and how it can build assets, strength, and resilience to address the disparities that resulted in disproportionate impacts.

This team will provide recommendations, based on current communitywide input, to guide the allocation of ARPA Funding. The process of discovery and design will ensure an improved outcome, one that will develop and transform the capacity of Boulder County to advance forward from the COVID-19 pandemic toward meaningful commitments to meet the needs of



residents most impacted by the pandemic.

Boulder County staff are supporting the efforts and providing resources as needed as a human-centered process is developed together. The process will include translation and interpretation services, communication and compensation, and other supports to address barriers to participation to ensure a multi-cultural approach.

In addition to this community engagement process, a number of other community engagement efforts have taken place to date during the pandemic through Forward Together Safely and PRRO BoCo.

### PRRO BoCo Community Engagement and Resource Coordination Team (CERN)

The Community Engagement and Resource Coordination team includes representatives from Boulder County Community Services and Boulder County Public Health and supports priority population access to resources – informational and case management – that mitigates the impacts of COVID-19, including accessing testing, adhering to containment recommendations, and accessing vaccines. The team has three areas of focus:

1. Community Relations
2. Communications / Campaigns
3. Resource Navigation

### CERN Objectives:

- Connect COVID+ priority populations who are in quarantine or isolation to support services\* so they can safely comply with disease control guidance. (Goal 1)
- Make referrals to services\* for priority populations to mitigate secondary impacts of COVID-19. (Goal 2)
- Ensure priority populations have and understand information about how to access testing, comply with quarantine and isolation guidance, and access vaccines. (Goal 3)
- Internally elevate and activate community feedback from Community Task Force and Resource Coordinator activities to improve the effectiveness of Boulder County services, communication, outreach, and delivery to mitigate the disparate impacts of COVID-19. (Goal 4)

*\*Support services may include health services, food security, rental assistance, utility assistance, worker rights, PPE, immigration support, testing for family members, home isolation support, mental health, technology access, communication and translation needs.*

### **Family Resource Centers**

Boulder County has long-standing relationships with the local Family Resource Centers (FRCs), including the OUR Center, Sister Carmen Community Center and Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA). The FRCs provide basic needs services to individuals and families needing support in areas such as housing, rental assistance, food access, and general case management. Because of the work they have done to directly meet needs throughout the



COVID-19 pandemic, the FRCs have been able to nimbly communicate trends and service gaps. Information from the FRCs has been used to inform needs around utility assistance, staff support and financial assistance for those isolating or quarantining due to COVID-19.

### **Boulder County and City of Boulder and City of Longmont Housing Programs**

Housing-specific needs and gaps have been informed by the Boulder County Housing and Human Services Housing Stabilization Program (HSP) through data gathered in the process of providing services to residents. The Housing Stabilization Program has been utilizing federal dollars to provide rent, utility, and housing stabilization assistance, and has been able to identify areas of need related to housing. Information from the City of Boulder's No Eviction Without Representation program also has helped to inform of the need. HSP also works with City of Boulder and City of Longmont housing mediation programs, which have staff and volunteers that work with tenants and landlords to avoid eviction, usually while working to support the securing of rental assistance with Emergency Rental Assistance funds.

### **Bridge to Justice**

Bridge to Justice is a non-profit organization that provides free and low-cost legal aid and has been engaging with County residents through eviction prevention measures. As a contractor for the City of Boulder's No Eviction Without Representation program, Bridge to Justice has been able to provide additional data around eviction-prevention needs.

### **County-wide Non-profit Organizations**

Non-profit organizations were engaged in an effort to understand needs related to the "Digital Divide," which were initiated or aggravated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. County staff collected feedback around agency and client technology needs. Many of those needs were at least partially met with CARES Act funds, though the need is not fully met and continues.

### **Boulder County Public Health**

Boulder County Public Health (BCPH) has responded to the pandemic with significant community-engaged work in relation to COVID-19. Community Ambassadors support priority populations for testing, isolation, quarantine, and vaccination access. The CIDER team, a collaboration of regional health system leadership, coordinates vaccine distribution. BCPH Case Investigators have had direct contact with residents who are needing to isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure or a positive test. Since using the statewide COVID database in October of 2020, more than 800 Boulder County individuals contacted by BCPH resource navigators/contact tracers stated that they needed resource supports to be able to isolate or quarantine. The most common resource concern is economic security (e.g. concerns about rent and utilities, eviction) at 48 percent of individuals in isolation or quarantine that expressed resource needs, followed by employment (e.g. concerns about missing work or needing information about paid sick leave) at 29 percent then food at 28 percent. This information was able to inform a request for funding to support this population.

BCPH also engages with the community through the COVID-19 Call Center. Individuals call to report complaints, report exposure, request resource referrals, or ask general questions related to COVID testing or vaccinations.



### **Cultural Brokers Resilience Program**

The Cultural Brokers Resilience Program (CBRP) partners with local nonprofits and volunteer groups to create a culturally competent COVID-19 Community Resource Catalog to serve primarily Spanish-speaking residents in Boulder County, as well as residents who speak neither English nor Spanish, including those without documentation.

The CBRP COVID-19 Community Task Force was a project developed in partnership with the Philantropiece Foundation and was able to convene groups of residents to seek input on topics such as mental health, economic impacts, childcare, and accessibility challenges due to COVID-19. The impact of the nine-month project was measured by implementing qualitative research strategies such as focus groups, discourse analysis, and oral history. The qualitative key performance indicators included a compilation of anecdotal evidence to explore public perception of government processes and system accessibility, and informed quantitative data gathered by other Boulder County agencies. The time spent addressing the different topics at each meeting was quantified to determine the most urgent or recurrent needs expressed by County residents. The groups stories were also integrated to larger community discourse to propose culturally informed practices for COVID-19 recovery based on community informed prioritization and project planning.

The Boulder County ¡SUMA! COVID-19 Response project has a targeted population of 17,000 County residents. In partnership with a local network of Cultural Brokers, the project reached between 10,000 and 11,000 individuals, including those affected by the digital divide (community members lacking equipment or connectivity to access services, work, or school remotely).

### **Boulder County Economic Response and Recovery Coalition**

As a part of Boulder County's emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff from the County convened local chambers of commerce and economic development organizations from across the county. The groups met weekly to help disseminate public health compliance information to businesses and to share needs from the business and economic community. The coalition continues to meet twice a month during the recovery effort. These are the partners in the coalition:

▶ City of Boulder	▶ Erie Chamber	▶ Boulder County PACE
▶ Town of Erie	▶ Lafayette Chamber	▶ Workforce Boulder County
▶ City of Lafayette	▶ Longmont EDP	▶ Public Health Business Liaison Team
▶ City of Longmont	▶ Louisville Chamber	▶ Boulder County Commissioners Office
▶ City of Louisville	▶ Superior Chamber	▶ CREA Results and The Idea Marketing-multiple community partners
▶ Town of Lyons	▶ Small Business Development Center	
▶ Town of Nederland	▶ Latino Chamber	
▶ Town of Superior		
▶ Niwot Business Assoc.		
▶ Boulder Chamber		

In response to the pandemic, the Boulder Chamber and the Latino Chamber partnered to host bi-weekly webinars with Boulder County Public Health staff to answer businesses questions and



to keep businesses updated on changing public health orders. Additionally, the Small Business Development Center of Boulder County developed a centralized webpage for information on economic support opportunities for small businesses, and the Latino Chamber provided direct outreach and technical assistance to Latino-owned and Spanish-speaker-owned businesses throughout the county.

Each of these projects were funded by Boulder County with CARES Act funding. See the section on COVID-19 disparities for two additional projects funded by Boulder County Economic Response and Recovery Team.

Boulder County also provided PPE and To-go ware and two rounds of funding to small businesses impacted by the pandemic as well as one round of 1.9 million dollars in state funds to impacted small businesses throughout the county. Each of these processes were administered in English and Spanish, with a call center help line in English and Spanish to assist small businesses in the application process.





## Labor Practices

Potential infrastructure projects have not yet been determined and will be evaluated by Boulder County during the mid-term SLFRF planning phase from August through October 2021. Labor practices related to all approved infrastructure projects will be described within subsequent Boulder County SLFRF reports, as applicable.



## Use of Evidence

Programs and projects requesting ARPA SLFRF support will be evaluated for evidence-based design opportunities, where applicable. Additional planning and evaluation by the County is necessary to determine which longer-term ARPA programs (if any) will be categorized as evidence-based interventions. In addition, Boulder County will evaluate how a Learning Agenda (either narrowly focused on ARPA SLFRF funding or more broadly focused on the County's broader policy agenda(s)) could support the County's overarching evaluation efforts in order to create an evidence-building strategy for the jurisdiction. It should be noted that most Boulder County Public Health programs apply evidence-informed practices, as do many human services and other programs at Boulder County.



## Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination		
1.2	COVID-19 Testing		
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing		
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)	*(CRR 13)	*(CRR 13)
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment		
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)		
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency		
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)		
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19		
1.10	Mental Health Services		
1.11	Substance Use Services		
1.12	Other Public Health Services		
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs		
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid		
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	*(CRR 20)	*(CRR 20)
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs		
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention		
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers		
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)	*(CRR 6 & 15)	*(CRR 6 & 15)
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*		
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)		
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations		



Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality		
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries		
2.13	Other Economic Support		
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff		
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning		
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts		
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services		
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services		
3.5	Education Assistance: Other		
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care		
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting		
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System		
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other		
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing		
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons	*(CRR 11 & 12)	*(CRR 11 & 12)
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance		
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other		
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators		
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation		
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions		
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
4.1	Public Sector Employees		
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers		
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment		
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance		
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater		



Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows		
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure		
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater		
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation		
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation		
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source		
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment		
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution		
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation		
5.13	Drinking water: Source		
5.14	Drinking water: Storage		
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure		
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects		
5.17	Broadband: Other projects		
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services		
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses	\$22,550 *(CRR 40)	\$22,550 *(CRR 40)
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis		
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government		
7.4	Transfers to Non-entitlement Units (States and Territories only)		

\*Note: projects indicated above with an asterisk (\*) have been approved for funding as of 7/31/21, but recipients have been not yet received funding distributions and/or authorization instructions from the Boulder County Office of Financial Management (OFM) as of July 31, 2021, as the implementation process, procedures, and forms are being finalized. Retroactive expenses (if applicable) incurred prior to July 31, 2021 but within authorized ARPA SLFRF funding periods will be evaluated for OFM approval and any necessary accounting adjustments. Any retroactive expenses allocated (if any) will be verified and reflected in subsequent report(s) as appropriate.

\*Project Task #9 - Financial Assistance for the Family Resource Centers to support community needs (CRR 7) also not reflected above, as final scope of work and reporting categories are still being determined.



## Project Inventory

### List of Projects

#### 1. COVID-19 REQUEST FOR FUNDING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STAFFING (CRR 4)

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 1, Category 7.1.1**

Funding amount: \$1,280,406

Projected Duration: 48 months

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

##### Project Overview

Funding for temporary staff to assist in administration and management of ARPA and various grant funding received between 2021 and 2024. Duties include facilitating requests for funding, eligibility evaluation, financial compliance, accounting, reporting, account reconciling, and audit preparation. Staff resources are also needed for communications, briefings, presentations, training, and other reporting and procedure development. This request includes FT Program Manager, FT Grant Accountant, PT Clerical Support, PT Eligibility Analyst, and Communications Specialist coordinating across BoCo units.

##### Use of Evidence

N/A

#### 2. Project – Employment Services (CRR 6)

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 2, Category 2.7.1**

Funding amount: \$385,000

Projected Duration: 12 months

Project Expenditure Category: 2.7 Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)\* ^

##### Project Overview

This request supports staffing of five individuals to support the employment and re-employment needs of our local residents. Workforce Boulder County will hire four "Employment Advisors" supported by one supervisor. The advisors will meet one on one with the public, provide triaging services, information and referrals, coaching and connecting to jobs. Two advisors will work at the St. Vrain Community HUB and two will work out of the Boulder Office at 1333 Iris. This service will complement other services including the Virtual Call Center, Career Development Workshops and the more intensive case managements services (including training and retraining).

##### Use of Evidence

To be determined





### **3. Project – Support for a Successful Implementation of the Emergency Choice Vouchers (CRR 11)**

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 3, Category 3.11.1**

Funding amount: \$120,000

Projected Duration: 12 months

Project Expenditure Category: 3.11 Housing Support: Services for Unhoused Persons\* ^

#### **Project Overview**

A full-time case manager specializing in Move On protocols will provide support to individuals experiencing homelessness. This position will help connect individuals with vouchers and secure vacant apartments. HUD released Emergency Choice Vouchers to eligible Public Housing Authorities to address connecting individuals experiencing homelessness to housing. These one-time funds are an opportunity to positively impact unhoused individuals. By providing up to two months of market rate rent to landlords who report a vacant unit, we can ensure individuals with vouchers can rapidly connect to a unit willing to receive it. This approach can also assist with individuals who have challenging backgrounds as these funds and approaches can be used as a tool to recruit new landlords.

#### **Use of Evidence**

To be determined

### **4. Project – Connecting Individuals Experiencing Homelessness with Services (CRR 12)**

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 4, Category 3.11.2**

Funding amount: \$21,600

Projected Duration: 6 months

Project Expenditure Category: 3.11 Housing Support: Services for Unhoused Persons\* ^

#### **Project Overview**

Providing more minutes to individuals experiencing homelessness who have run out and still have flip phones, flip phones for access to services, tablets, hot spots, and data cards to support mountain communities engaging with unhoused campers over the summer months. Individuals experiencing homelessness are still challenged with accessing services as not all service providers have returned to 100 percent in person capacity. To ensure individuals experiencing homelessness have access to critical services, Homeless Solutions of Boulder County will provide support in meeting that need. The lack of access to in-person services has negatively impacted individuals experiencing homelessness to connect to critical services.

#### **Use of Evidence**

To be determined



## **5. Project – Juvenile Assessment Center extension of COVID FTE term positions (CRR 13)**

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 5, Category 1.4.1**

Funding amount: \$130,084

Projected Duration: 12 months

Project Expenditure Category: 1.4 Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)\*

### Project Overview

Throughout the pandemic and into the recovery stage the Juvenile Assessment Center has operated continuously in person as a secure juvenile detention facility for Boulder County law enforcement. The Juvenile Center is the only county-funded intake, assessment, and short-term detention facility in the state, with a maximum holding capacity of 20 youths, ages 10 to 17. This facility provides structured programming including educational and life skill activities in order to further reduce harm. The need for well trained and sustained full time positions is a critical need throughout COVID and the recovery to maintain safe and secure care for our county's most vulnerable families and juveniles. The scope of work for this request extends two full-time term positions throughout the COVID recovery.

### Use of Evidence

To be determined

## **6. Project – Workforce Boulder County Virtual Call Center (VCC) (CRR 15)**

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 6, Category 2.7.2**

Funding amount: \$370,000

Projected Duration: 12 months

Project Expenditure Category: 2.7 Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)\* ^

### Project Overview

The VCC is regarded as a “hub” for anyone impacted by unemployment. VCC responds to the COVID Pandemic in that it addresses the direct need of people who lost jobs due to the economic downturn initiated by the pandemic, helping people in our community regain economic and employment stability for themselves and their families. People who lost their jobs due to the pandemic experienced significant wait-times attempting to reach the state Unemployment Office (UI), and Workforce Boulder County's VCC provided a place for people to reach resolution.

The scope of work is answering calls and identifying the unique needs of each person and determine the next best steps to build them towards sustainable employment. VCC agents specialize in understanding the unemployment system, have a working knowledge of the career



development process, stay abreast of the internal and external sources available to provide warm referrals, and strive to offer the best in public service.

Use of Evidence

To be determined

## 7. Left Behind Workers Fund

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 7, Category 2.3.1**

Funding amount: \$300,000

Projected Duration: 15 months

Project Expenditure Category: 2.3 Household Assistance: Cash Transfers\* ^

Project Overview

The Left Behind Workers Fund (LBWF) provides financial support to workers that have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and are ineligible for unemployment insurance and stimulus funds. The LBWF provides \$1000 in direct cash assistance to workers who experienced loss of employment after February 2020, including complete job loss, current job loss of 20+ hours/week, or previous loss of 20+ hours/week for month or more, as well as those impacted by an unpaid leave of absence from work due to school or daycare closures, the need to care for family members, or the need to remain quarantined after possible COVID-19 exposure.

Use of Evidence

To be determined

## 8. ARPA Planning Contractor

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 8, Category 7.1.2**

Funding amount: \$100,000

Projected Duration: 16 months

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project Overview

Under the management of the Boulder County Commissioners' Chief of Staff, the consultant will develop and manage a deliberate and transparent process for the Commissioners to solicit and synthesize input from a diverse set of internal and external stakeholders on use of ARPA Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) resources and other available pandemic-related funds. They will coordinate as needed with other contractors and staff in areas such as eligibility, compliance, community engagement, reporting, and planning. The consultant also will deliver a gap analysis to the BOCC by September 15, 2021 that analyzes data on how the pandemic has impacted Boulder County and input gathered to date from the community, staff, and other partners. This should include input specifically related to



use of SLFRF moneys, as well as other existing reports (to be provided by BOCC staff) that reflect the priorities and needs of different parts of the Boulder County community. In addition to summarizing common themes and priorities, the gap analysis should also identify information gaps where specific communities are not represented. This gap analysis should be deployed to ensure that the subsequent report captures the views of the community in an equitable and comprehensive way. Deliver a draft report to the BOCC by October 1, 2021, that presents data, input from a variety of stakeholders, and defines high level options for use of SLFRF funds that is reflective of and responsive to this stakeholder input, includes equity and racial equity considerations, meets BOCC policy objectives, and is compliant with federal guidelines and regulations.

Use of Evidence

To be determined

**9. Project – Financial Assistance for the Family Resource Centers to support community needs (CRR 7)**

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 3, Category \*TBD**

Funding amount: \$750,000

Projected Duration: 6 months

Project Expenditure Category: \*TBD

*\*Note: individual FRC projects below and scope of work still being evaluated for SLFRF eligibility and reporting alignment. Project Overview below subject to change and to be reported in subsequent SLFRF reports.*

Project Overview

Providing funds to the Family Resource Centers to continue meeting immediate community needs across Boulder County – the exact scope is being defined at the time of this report. FRC's most directly serve priority populations including but not limited to the homeless/housing unstable, BIPOC, low income, and immigrant communities. The FRCs continue to report higher than normal needs and service delivery due to the pandemic, including additional wait times for appointments, increased direct financial assistance, increased calls, increased referrals to Housing Help Line, and \$40-\$50k monthly in utility billing assistance. In addition, school districts ended food programs in June and anticipated increases in the costs for food and other essential items will impact the FRC's ability to serve the community without further depleting their reserves.

Use of Evidence

To be determined



## Performance Report

### 1. COVID-19 REQUEST FOR FUNDING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STAFFING (CRR 4)

Project [Identification Number]:

Fund 117, Service 1010, Project 102493, **Task 7.11 Project Support**

#### Interim Progress Report through 7/31/21

- One full time Program Manager contract position was hired in April 2021, to manage CRR funding request process and ongoing management of ARPA funding. CRR evaluation and review process has been established, with regular briefings to PRRO BoCo Leads and Coordination Teams, and BOCC.
- Financial monitoring, tracking, compliance, and reporting requirements are being assessed, documented, and implemented.
- Coordination of financial and expenditure information with Office of Financial Management Transparency Project and other Data Team(s) as needed.
- Communications specialist position recently recruited and being onboarded.
- Outcomes will be measured through successful funding processes, accurate expense accounting, as well as program reporting and monitoring.

Note: Approved projects #2-9 above have effective dates of August 2021 or later and are therefore not reflected in this section. Subsequent reports will include progress information on additional projects, as applicable.