

# Key Performance Indicators

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Contra Costa County is responsible for the administration of benefit programs to support its community's health and well-being. To support this responsibility, Contra Costa County would benefit from formalizing the process of developing and monitoring performance standards through the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) methodology. Building upon Napa County's

successful KPI implementation process across eight Health and Human Services divisions, which includes four phases of 1) Education and Creation, 2) Methodology Development, 3) Implementation, and 4) Monitoring, Contra Costa County can support data-driven decision-making and improve benefits program service delivery.

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## Introduction

The State of California has an estimated population of 39.02 million individuals as of July 2022 and is the largest population in the nation<sup>1</sup>. According to the United States Census Bureau, as of 2021, the demographic composition of California is 35.2% non-Hispanic white, 40.2% Hispanic or Latino, 0.5% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 15.9% Asian American, 1.7% Native American or Alaskan Native, 6.5% Black or African American, and 4.2% two or more races. Additionally, California's 65 or older population is estimated to grow to 1 in 5 individuals by 2023, and those 65 and under with a disability are estimated at 6.8% of the population<sup>2</sup>. The unique demographic composition of California, coupled with 12.3% of the population living in poverty, places a tremendous responsibility on human services departments to deliver welfare benefits to an increasingly diverse and aging population.

The state of California administers public assistance benefits at the county level, and each county is responsible for meeting compliance requirements set by the federal and state governments. Compliance requirements set by the federal and state dictate benefit administration, efficiency, issuance speed, and issuance accuracy. Additionally, the law requires welfare benefits to be delivered in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives federal

funds or other federal financial assistance. Programs that receive federal funds cannot distinguish among individuals on the basis of race, color, or national origin, either directly or indirectly, in the types, quantity, quality, or timeliness of program services, aids, or benefits they provide or the manner in which they provide them<sup>3</sup>. California counties have adopted various methods to meet welfare requirements and have begun adopting data-driven decision-making and performance measurement tools to provide their residents equal access to welfare benefits for their residents.

## Napa County and Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are quantifiable measurements of performance over time and assist agencies in making strategic decisions supported by data and analytics to meet all federal and state mandates<sup>4</sup>. Data and analytics continue to play a vital role in human services, and KPIs aid in making data-driven decisions and quantifying progress toward an intended result. KPIs are established at all levels of an organization and highlight an agency's values and priorities, promote a desired outcome, and assist in the equitable administration of welfare programs. KPIs can be used in human services to remain compliant with federal and state guidelines and increase equitable service delivery of benefits to communities.

Napa County utilizes KPIs across eight Health and Human Services divisions to create a culture of transparency in what and

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau QuickFacts. (n.d.). *U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: California; United States*. Census Bureau QuickFacts. [https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CA\\_US/PST045221](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CA_US/PST045221)

<sup>2</sup> California's Population. (2023). *Public Policy Institute of California*. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/californias-population/>

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<sup>3</sup> Title VI at DHS | Homeland Security. (n.d.). <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/title-vi-dhs#:~:text=Title%20VI%20of%20the%20Civil%20Rights%20Act%20of,programs%20and%20activities%20that%20receive%20federal%20financial%20assistance.>

<sup>4</sup> Harlow, J. (2023) What is a key performance indicator (KPI)?, KPI.org. Accessed: 25 August 2023 at: <https://www.kpi.org/kpi-basics/>

how data are used in decision-making to reach intended results. Implementing KPIs in Napa County consisted of four key phases: 1) Education and Creation, 2) Methodology Development, 3) Implementation, and 4) Monitoring<sup>5</sup>. Each phase of the KPI implementation acted as a distinct process to facilitate information flow and manage change to move the agency towards data-driven decision-making and increasing access to welfare programs for all communities in Napa County.

The first stage in the KPI development Napa County underwent was the Education and Creation stage. In the Education and Creation stage, intentional meetings were set between staff at all levels of the agency and stakeholders in the KPI process. These meetings served as an opportunity to cultivate an environment of partnership and to allow information to flow in all directions. The meetings between staff and stakeholders allowed Napa County to facilitate consensus on the mission, vision, and values of specific programs and services. The values and visions produced during these meetings became the foundation for Napa County's KPI framework and led Napa County into the second phase: Methodology.

The Methodology phase of KPIs was the phase that required the most significant time investment for Napa County because it required the county to dive deep into the small and large details of KPIs. The Methodology phase consists of:

- Setting a target for the KPI and establishing a percent or number as the desired outcome for the KPI
- Identifying the governing authority and whether there is a county, state,

or federal mandate established for the KPI

- Establishing a data source and clarifying limitations of data collection
- Establishing a numerator which represents the data which falls within the established threshold for success
- Establishing the denominator which represents the entirety of the measured data
- Establishing a frequency to report, review, and discuss the KPI data
- Identifying the lag time between when the data report period ends and when the data report is ready
- Identifying the risk type, or potential risk priority

The Methodology phase is also when a graphical display of the data is agreed upon. Napa County elected to use Power BI. The physical representation of data is vital so stakeholders can quickly and easily digest information and visually see performance over time. Once the Methodology phase concluded, Napa County moved into the Implementation phase.

The Implementation phase of KPI is the “take-action phase” in which the county went live with KPI. The data was entered into necessary databases to correctly display on Power BI. Then, the data was validated, and any system glitches were corrected. The final Power BI dashboard was then shared with stakeholders to participate in the final stage of KPI: Monitoring.

The Monitoring phase of KPI is when KPIs displayed on Power BI are reviewed. The Monitoring phase is an opportunity to identify KPIs surpassing established targets and acknowledge their success. It is also an opportunity to identify KPIs underperforming and to take a targeted approach to elevate the KPI to meet the desired outcomes. During the Monitoring

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<sup>5</sup> Akil, L. (2023) *Key Performance Indicator Development- Napa County*

Phase, any influences for KPIs are formally recorded to provide a whole-picture approach to KPIs. Napa County also established quality improvement projects based on KPIs that were regularly underperforming or not meeting targets to improve their delivery of services.

The development of KPIs allowed Napa County to take a targeted approach to areas of their organization identified as underperforming to elevate their performance to the KPI standard. Elevating service delivery allows the residents of Napa County to participate in welfare programs equitably and receive similar service levels regardless of external factors such as age or location. Involving the stakeholders in the process facilitated buy-in, and Napa County continues its commitment to KPI to evaluate its service delivery and to produce desired outcomes for the benefit programs it administers.

## **Recommendations**

KPIs provide Contra Costa County the opportunity to maintain Federal, State, and County compliance mandates, and it is recommended that Contra Costa County implement a formal meeting with key stakeholders at regular intervals to increase compliance rates. Requiring a formal meeting to discuss KPIs would require direction from the Executive team to the management team to identify key stakeholders and establish a meeting cycle to discuss and recommend business process changes to support KPI. Due to technological advances, it is recommended the KPI meeting be held virtually to reduce commute times and costs to the County. It is recommended during the KPI meeting, key stakeholders identify KPI trends and formally document these trends to support business decisions to increase Contra Costa County's service delivery and compliance with Federal, State, and County mandates.

Failure to meet these required mandates results in Corrective Action Plans from the Federal and State government and add an increased cost to Contra Costa County and an increased workload at all layers of the organization. The labor cost of attending individuals is a necessity to maintaining mandatory program compliance and service delivery, and it is recommended Contra Costa County begins the Education and Creation phase of KPI in the first quarter of the calendar year 2024 and enter a monitoring phase of KPI by the fourth quarter of the calendar year 2024.

To support entering the monitoring phase by the fourth quarter of the calendar year 2024, Contra Costa County must enter the Education and Creation in the first quarter, Methodology Development in the second quarter, and Implementation by the third quarter. Spending the first quarter of the calendar year educating and creating KPIs would facilitate buy-in from staff at all levels of the organization. It is recommended Contra Costa County enter the development stage no later than the second quarter of the calendar year 2024 because it is the stage requiring the largest amount of time. Finally, Contra Costa County would enter the implementation phase in the third quarter to support a monitoring phase by the fourth quarter.

It is recommended Contra Costa County utilizes existing reports and tools from CalSAWS to support KPI implementation. Accurate reports capturing KPIs are vital to document trends and identify under and over-performing KPIs. Utilizing current reports does not require additional cost investment from Contra Costa County because existing reports capture the required compliance rates established by the Federal and State governments. If Contra Costa County desires to capture additional KPIs outside of the mandated compliance rates,

additional funding is required to purchase and develop an ancillary report; for this reason, it is not recommended to develop additional KPIs at this time. With existing technology, Contra Costa County has access to data visualization for several potential KPIs with no additional cost to the County. Contra Costa County also has a Policy and Planning division that is responsible for capturing demographic and statistical data and visualizations of the data that could be used for further development of KPIs, and it is recommended to utilize Policy and Planning to participate in KPI.

KPIs are an opportunity for Contra Costa County to maintain their compliance rates, mitigate risk for Corrective Action Plans, and increase service delivery to the residents of Contra Costa County, and for these reasons, it is recommended to implement KPIs. Contra Costa County has minimal cost to implement KPIs for required compliance mandates and only experiences an increase in cost if additional KPIs not captured by existing CalSAWS reports are developed. Entering the KPI education and development phase in the first quarter of the calendar year 2024 and entering the monitoring phase of KPI by the fourth quarter of the calendar year 2024 allows sufficient time to purposefully and intentionally develop and implement KPIs with key stakeholders with results of KPI reflecting in the first quarter of the calendar year 2025.

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