

2023 COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

As the sixth most densely populated county in the nation, Orange County is responsible for implementing a variety of state, federal and local programs to meet the needs of a diverse population. To meet the needs of our residents and ensure the health and stability of our communities, the County strives to strengthen the social safety net and continue our equity efforts, while remaining fiscally prudent and accountable to taxpayers. Accordingly, the County has identified the following federal policy priorities for 2023.

Homelessness & Housing Funding

Orange County has implemented effective strategies and partnerships to reduce and prevent homelessness by leveraging federal, state, and local funds. The County will support increased federal appropriations for key housing and homeless assistance grant programs and advocate for legislative initiatives that authorize funding for comprehensive services and care coordination, including housing stabilization services funding paired with housing subsidies. The County will also support increased funding for federal programs, including but not limited to, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, Community Development Block Grant Program, and Emergency Solutions Grants; and advocate for increased resources to meet the increasing demand for disability compensation, health care related claims, and the housing needs of its growing veteran population.

Mental Health & Recovery Services Funding

Orange County will support efforts to protect County allocations and advocate for increased funding for mental health and recovery services. Flexible funding and resources that improve cross-sector service coordination and advance key County initiatives, including the Be Well behavioral health campuses, are critical to building a responsive continuum of care for people experiencing substance use, trauma, or other mental health crises. The County will support efforts and proposals to ensure sufficient resources and flexibility to implement federal and state initiatives, as well as advance federal, state, and local partnerships to provide evidence-based treatment to justice involved youth and adults with mental illness and substance use disorders.

OC CARES / Justice Reform Funding

Orange County will continue ongoing efforts to strengthen linkages between the County criminal justice system and systems of care that provide services to inmates and at-risk individuals to increase self-sufficiency, facilitate successful reentry into the community, and reduce recidivism. The County will advocate for legislative and funding proposals to support the diversion of youth and adults from incarceration while maintaining public safety; increase funding and eligibility for resources including, but not limited to, housing, mental health and substance use disorder services, and youth development programs; ensure sufficient flexibility and resources are made available to successfully implement federal and state reforms; and improve the federal, state and local partnership in providing safety-net services to pretrial incarcerated individuals that are currently denied access to federal benefits per the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy (MIEP).

Infrastructure / IJA Funding

Orange County will continue to advocate for its fair share of funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and other appropriations for critical infrastructure and environmental/coastal sustainability projects including John Wayne Airport modernization, broadband connectivity, road and bridge improvements, and coastal restoration projects.

Flood Control & Coastal Erosion Sustainability Funding

Orange County will advocate for proposals and funding that facilitate the development of flood control infrastructure, including but not limited to, the Santa Ana River Mainstem and Westminster-East Garden Gove Flood Management Projects. Additionally, the County will prepare for hazardous climate impacts by supporting efforts that protect its environmental and coastal resources; promote sustainable and climate resilient technology; and strengthen the infrastructure in place to effectively prepare, mitigate and respond to disasters and emergencies.