



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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County ranked fourth county in the nation in securing FEMA funding for pandemic response
Funding allowed for the county to use other relief sources to give direct support to the community

Ventura, CA – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) ranks Ventura County fourth in the nation for securing funding for COVID-19 response. “The County took an aggressive approach in seeking FEMA reimbursement for the County’s \$104 million in costs associated with our community-based testing, vaccine, non-congregate sheltering and meal delivery efforts in 2020. This approach was an administratively arduous task; however, the benefit was that it allowed our County to maximize the investment back into the community with more than \$150 million in local assistance,” said County Executive Officer Mike Powers.

FEMA’s Public Assistance program provides grants to government following a presidential disaster declaration to quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. The process to obtain grants is extensive. “It is outstanding. It really says something about our staff that they were able to do the extra work to make this happen. It certainly paid off for members of our community,” said Chair of the Board Supervisor Linda Parks.

The County of Ventura ranks fourth, in securing FEMA funding, behind Denver County at number three, Miami-Dade County at number two and Los Angeles County at number one.

The County of Ventura’s COVID-19 Response Spending Plan has included \$400 million in supportive services and direct grants for the community. “The pandemic impacted just about every part of our community and economy. We budgeted and allocated funds in order to address multiple community health, social and economic impacts as well as basic needs. Securing FEMA funding for eligible incurred COVID-19 costs, allowed for additional funding to be provided where it was needed most,” added Powers. The County’s Covid-19 response costs were funded by several sources including FEMA, Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, and the Older Americans Act.

“The County of Ventura’s strong fiscal position allowed us to act quickly to provide significant services and supplies in response to the pandemic. Available reserves were used to quickly ramp up supportive programs,” said County Chief Financial Officer Kaye Mand. Community members were struggling to pay their rent, so a rental assistance program was launched. \$11.4 million went to cover 3 months for households in need. \$3.5 million was provided for farmworkers for household assistance. The County’s positive financial position allowed for reserves to be used to quickly obtain hotels providing shelter for



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more than 600 community members. COVID isolation support was also made available for any community member in need. \$40 million was provided to restaurants helping to keep them open while also serving more than 6 million meals to vulnerable homebound adults. \$3.4 million supported expanded Food Share pop up sites for community members in need.

The County supported struggling businesses with four rounds of business assistance grants with \$70 million in support to over 7,000 businesses. The County also launched a business ambassador program to help businesses navigate COVID-19 compliance. The Resource Management Agency and the Ventura County Fire District also waived fees for businesses experiencing hardships. Business Ambassadors visited more than 16,000 businesses.

The County took an all-hands-on deck approach to coordinate response including the reallocation of 980 disaster services workers to do whatever was needed for the community including high volume testing and vaccine roll out.

“It’s important for the community to know how these public funds were managed. They went back to the community during a time when it was needed most,” added Powers.

COVID-19 Spending \$400 Million (CRF, PRF, & FEMA) Thru Dec 2021

