



Notice of Funding Opportunity: Incentive Payment Program (IPP) Community Health Worker (CHW) Academy Capacity Building Grants

Application Deadline — February 1, 2024 (5 p.m. PST)
Link to Apply: [CalOptima Health CalAIM IPP CHW Grant Portal](#)

Background

CalOptima Health’s mission is to serve member health with excellence and dignity, respecting the value and needs of each person. With a strategic goal of decreasing health inequities, CalOptima Health is engaging in programs and expanding partnerships to better serve members who are at greater risk for poor health outcomes.

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) is a multiyear plan to transform California’s Medi-Cal program and seamlessly integrate medical and social services. Led by California’s Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), the goal of CalAIM is to improve outcomes for Medi-Cal members, especially those with the most complex needs.

CalOptima Health is participating in DHCS’s CalAIM Incentive Payment Program (IPP). The IPP is intended to support the implementation and expansion of CalAIM, including Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and Community Supports, by incentivizing managed care plans (MCPs) to invest in provider capacity and delivery system infrastructure, bridge current silos across physical and behavioral health care service delivery, reduce health disparities and promote health equity, achieve improvements in quality performance, and encourage facilitation and use of new benefits.

In July 2022, DHCS approved the addition of CHW services as a Medi-Cal benefit. CHW services are described as “preventive health services ... to prevent disease, disability, and other health conditions or their progression; to prolong life; and promote physical and mental health and efficiency. CHWs are trusted members of their community who help address chronic conditions, preventive health care needs, and health-related social needs” ([State Plan Amendment \(SPA\) 22-0001](#), Attachment 3.1-A, p.18e).

Community Investment Strategy

CalOptima Health is prioritizing projects and programs that are trauma-informed, inclusive, non-residency restricted, low barrier and aligned with housing-first and harm-reduction principles. This includes ensuring the “voice of lived experience” is integrated into the design, development, implementation and evaluation phases.

CalOptima Health is committed to the following:

- Working toward a cohesive, countywide approach to address and prevent homelessness.
- Developing equitable systems that distribute resources among a variety of community service providers across all three service planning areas.
- Promoting and facilitating innovation in data collection and sharing, with emphasis on greater integration across systems.
- Increasing the number of service providers and the capacity of these providers to add to the overall continuum of care infrastructure throughout Orange County.
- Establishing and/or using best practices in providing care by meeting members “where they are” and increasing access to that care.
- Delivering culturally competent services to traditionally underrepresented populations (e.g., families, seniors, LGBTQIA+ individuals, Black, Indigenous, etc.).
- Investing in and implementing programs that add to the current available affordable housing pool.

Funding Opportunities

To support the continued rollout and implementation of the CHW services benefit in Orange County, CalOptima Health will be funding up to 15 capacity building grants for organizations to participate in the first CHW Academy cohort.

IPP Capacity Building Grants for CHW Academy Providers — \$100,000 for one year, from April 2024 to March 2025. CalOptima Health anticipates funding for up to 15 organizations. This funding opportunity is open to all applicants not currently contracted with CalOptima Health for CHW services.

This funding opportunity is designed to engage organizations with a history of conducting CHW activities by creating the first cohort of the CHW Academy and providing resources to increase organizational capacity of eligible providers. The CHW Academy and capacity building grant activities are both intended to support the development of a regional CHW workforce and the uptake of the CHW benefit. The CHW Academy is designed to create a collaborative cohort of CHW providers in Orange County to support provider organizations, share best practices, provide comprehensive training and credentialing, and align with supplementary CalAIM services such as ECM and Community Supports.

Funds can be utilized by organizations to build their infrastructure, care teams and technology systems to roll out or increase the uptake of the CHW benefit.

To facilitate the submission of competitive proposals, CalOptima Health will open a grant application portal for eligible applicant organizations from **December 18, 2023, to February 1, 2024, 5 p.m. PST.**

Requirements for CHW Academy Capacity Building Grants

Providers applying for capacity building grant funds are required to provide a program implementation plan which outlines how they will use grant funds to build capacity to support the rollout and/or uptake of the CHW benefit and participate in the CHW Academy. Please note that proposed budgets should adequately reflect scope and depth of program objectives/deliverables. The program implementation plan may include the following **sample objectives** related to capacity building or propose alternative objectives and activities identified by the organization to satisfy the grant's intent and funding requirements:

- Build workforce capacity
 - Hire new/additional staff such as CHWs, also known as promotores, outreach coordinators, outreach specialists and/or community educators
 - Conduct staff trainings on topics such as violence prevention, community health, asthma remediation, trauma-informed care and culturally competent care
 - Increase workforce development through provision of additional full- and part-time equivalents (FTEs and PTEs), promotion of key staff positions or onboarding staff with lived experiences
 - Accredite or recertify CHW staff through DHCS-defined three-tiered pathways
- Build technology capacity
 - Obtain and launch new software to run programs and track outcomes
 - Upgrade technology hardware to support additional programming and data requirements
 - Update or upgrade billing systems to more efficiently submit claims
 - Purchase and install necessary equipment such as computers, tablets, accounting software, etc.
 - Implement a data collection system to collect, refine and sort client data or program outcomes
- Build organizational capacity
 - Develop improved workflows to serve greater volume of members
 - Develop improved workflows to more efficiently serve members
 - Implement sustainable billing practices for the CHW benefit
 - Conduct strategic planning to improve connections with Populations of Focus within the community
 - Develop a community resources directory or local referral pipeline protocols
 - Create and distribute marketing materials to provide health education on issues including chronic conditions, infectious disease, sexual and reproductive health, substance use, or perinatal health conditions
 - Create and distribute marketing materials promoting health navigation services such as referrals, screening, assessment, and individual support or advocacy
 - Collaborate with other providers and county entities to streamline services and identify appropriate referrals and community resources for members

Required Participation in the CHW Academy and Future Contracted Service Provision

Requirements to receive grant funding include full and active participation in the CHW Academy, which culminates in a signed contract with CalOptima Health to provide CHW services. Academy participants are expected to provide contracted CHW services for a minimum of one year. Once grantees are selected for funding, they will be contacted for inclusion in the CHW Academy.

CHW Academy Cohort Duration: April 2024–September 2024 (six months)

- Weekly Meetings: Minimum of one hour per week, beginning April 2024
- Monthly Training Attendance: Minimum of one hour per month, beginning April 2024, with representation from at least one member of organizational leadership and/or provider staff

Contracted with CalOptima Health to provide CHW Services: By October 1, 2024

Contracted CHW Service Provision (Minimum Time Frame): October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025

Grant Budgets, Amounts, Duration and Allowable Expenses

IPP CHW Academy Capacity Building grants are one-year, \$100,000 grants. This is an open grant opportunity to all applicants not currently contracted with CalOptima Health for CHW services. The timeframe for these grants is April 2024 to March 2025.

Allowable Expenses

Examples of allowable expenses for IPP funds include hiring and onboarding staff such as CHWs or promotores, the continued training and development of direct program and/or supervised organization staff, purchasing software and hardware necessary to provide services, hosting individual or group-based sessions, updating or implementing billing and claims systems, creating and distributing educational outreach materials, and hosting community-based events.

Note: Funds may not be used for the provision of CHW services.

Entities Eligible to Apply

This funding opportunity is designed to support applicants who meet the following criteria:

1. Applicants must meet [DHCS' CHW Supervisor Guidelines](#) and/or CHW Minimum Qualifications.
2. Applicants must contract with CalOptima Health to provide CHW services by October 2024.
3. Applicants must minimally engage in CHW Academy activities from October 2024 to September 2025.
4. Applicants must demonstrate a history of providing CHW services over the previous three to five years.
5. Applicants must have a physical space in Orange County to conduct services. For the purposes of the funding opportunity, applicant organizations cannot operate entirely outside of Orange County.
6. Applicants who previously received funding from CalOptima Health must be/have been in good standing with the terms of that grant agreement to be eligible for new funding.

Entities Already Contracted with CalOptima Health to Provide CHW Services

The IPP CHW Academy Capacity Building Grant funding opportunity is competitive, open to the public and encourages all interested organizations and providers to apply. However, providers contracting for CHW services with CalOptima Health by January 1, 2024, will be invited to apply for funds separately from this opportunity. If an organization is interested in applying for CHW Academy Capacity Building Grant funds and already contracted with CalOptima Health for CHW services, please directly contact Gary Taylor at gary.taylor@caloptima.org.

Application Steps

Organizations interested in applying for IPP CHW Academy Capacity Building Grant funds can begin their applications at the following link: [CalOptima Health CalAIM IPP CHW Grant Portal](#).

Application Timeline

Action	Date
Application Release Date and Portal Opens	December 18, 2023
Q&A Session	January 9, 2024, at 2 p.m. (Register Here)
Application Deadline	February 1, 2024, by 5 p.m.
Internal Review	February 2024
Announcement of Approved Grants	March 8, 2024
Grant Agreements Processed	March 2024
Grant Start Date	April 1, 2024
Grant End Date	March 31, 2025

Questions?

Please forward any questions about the grant opportunity or application process to Gary Taylor, Manager, Program Implementation, at gary.taylor@caloptima.org.