

ICF Public Health

Integrated Services to Help State and Local Governments Respond to COVID-19 and Reopen

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ABOUT ICF

ICF is a global consulting services company with more than 7,000 specialized experts, but we are not your typical consultants. At ICF, business analysts and policy specialists work together with digital strategists, data scientists, grants managers, disaster recovery experts, and creatives to combine technical expertise with cutting-edge information technology and engagement capabilities. Since 1969, public- and private-sector clients have worked with ICF to navigate change and shape the future.

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Since the CDC Emergency Operations Center was activated on January 20th in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, ICF has been working closely with partners at CDC, US Department of Health and Human Services, the White House Coronavirus Task Force, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, and state and local health departments to collect data and exchange analytical insights to enable evidence-based decisions for the pandemic response. We have the people and experience to support all aspects of response and recovery and assist your community's return to a new normal.

How We Can Help

Figuring out what comes next is not an easy job. From tracing contacts of newly diagnosed individuals to preventing further virus transmission to managing recovery grants and anything in between, ICF can help by providing public health and disaster management expertise and staff to support project implementation. We have a 50-year history of helping clients at all levels of government and in the private sector to prepare for and address the public health, healthcare, and medical response consequences of hazards, disasters, and emergencies like the current pandemic.

Surveillance and Analytics

Understanding how to identify, track, and monitor individuals with COVID-19 requires a firm grasp of how diseases are transmitted, a workforce who can collect information about known cases, and the technology skills to both analyze the data and use it to inform future decisions. ICF has done this for CDC through our BioSense contract using COVID-19 data from almost every state. ICF supports data management, analysis, and dissemination for public health surveillance. We design the systems, secure the transfer of data from labs and other sources, and conduct sophisticated analyses to support our clients. Our epidemiologists and developers are integral to the successful execution of national surveillance programs like CDC's BioSense platform, the National Program of Cancer Registries, and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey.

Response Funding Management

With an influx of federal relief funds from across the government, it is critical for states to invest these dollars efficiently, effectively, and with no loss. ICF works with our partners to establish comprehensive, long-term recovery for communities by implementing Community Development Block Grants and other federal funding. We will help you apply every dollar to make your community stronger and more resilient in the face of future public health disasters and ensure you can account for every dollar of recovery money. It is some of the most important work we will ever do. In Puerto Rico, with over 90% local staff, we obligated \$1.9B in FEMA funding in the first year, more than any other disaster in US history. ICF maximized CDBG-Disaster Recovery funds for residents and impacted communities in New Jersey, Louisiana, Texas, North Carolina, and Florida.

Survey and Behavioral Research

To understand virus transmission in a community, we must ask people to recall what they've done and who they've interacted with. Technology can supplement this, but it is no substitute for the direct questioning from an empathetic interviewer trained to elicit the necessary information and provide guidance and reassurance to concerned citizens. ICF has more than 40 years of experience with survey design, data collection, and analysis for a range of public health programs. ICF is currently conducting Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System surveys for CDC and 15 state health departments. We handle more than 1.9 million inbound and outbound calls annually with more than 200 interviewers across multiple call centers. ICF has established technical call centers in Martinsville, VA; Bryan, TX; Seattle, WA; Ann Arbor, MI; Detroit, MI; Tulsa, OK; Atlanta, GA; and Baton Rouge, LA, and each location is fully equipped to support a remote workforce.

ICF can use whatever system is already in place (like RedCap) or design a custom case management system using Microsoft Dynamics, ServiceNow, Salesforce, and ZenDesk. ICF just deployed COVIDcode at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). In a short 2.5 weeks, we developed this ServiceNow application for NCI to enroll patients affected by COVID-19 for the COVIDcode study to learn about genetic contributions to the severity of COVID-19 disease. We collect data by phone, web, mail, and combinations of these. We use web chat (e.g., LiveChatNow) and chat bots to engage with participants. In fact, we've found that participants who engage via web chat are three times more likely to complete the task they set out to do. For contact tracing, participant engagement matters because follow-up is critical to fully understand the potential virus transmission to others.

Workforce Training and Development

The need to train a massive workforce to conduct surveillance activities or perform new jobs to reopen the economy now is acute. ICF works with employers and communities to train and employ displaced workers, returning veterans, the unemployed and underemployed, or those seeking to upgrade skills to ensure greater job security. These workforce development initiatives have served to increase the health and long-term sustainability of communities. We know what it takes to rapidly build a local workforce, train them, and provide them with the tools needed for success, as we have done in California, Texas, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico. In the US Virgin Islands, we are putting people back to work with job placement and on-the-job training through a Department of Labor National Dislocated Worker grant.

Even established workforces will require training to perform new tasks like contact tracing or deep cleaning, or to ensure every employee is kept as safe as possible. The ICF learning and development professionals have extensive experience in training public health partners including state and local staff and grantees using virtual training, online modules, and role-playing simulations. We can develop content, modify existing content for new learning platforms, or train using state or nationally developed materials. From preventing hospital infections to reducing overdose deaths, our staff develop engaging training for complex topics so that individuals are armed with the information they need to succeed.

Outreach and Communication

The coronavirus crisis has underscored the importance of clear and trustworthy communication in our communities, states, and across the nation. As we understand how our lives will change, we must share this information broadly to change people's behaviors. ICF's 1,000 person strong strategic communications group can build efforts to support outreach into any community to quickly promote the effectiveness and responsiveness of a contact tracing program, new restaurant and shopping guidelines, antibody testing, or whatever might come next in our new normal. Our campaigns to prevent opioid misuse, minimize antibiotic resistance in hospitals, and stop tobacco use have won awards and changed behaviors.

Cultural Competence in Public Health

Nowhere in the United States are the divisions of race, ethnicity, and culture more sharply drawn than in the health of our people. The ICF team has 35+ years of experience in interacting with people from every racial, ethnic, and cultural identity. We have engaged with young African American women to educate about breast cancer risk, Hispanic audiences to prevent diabetes, Native-Americans to reduce the incidence of suicide, and LGBTQ audiences for HIV prevention. Our public health experts can offer guidance in designing your contact tracing or other new program to reach the right people and then help to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs.



ICF stands ready to help you build short- and long-term resilience for your community's "new normal."
Read more about our COVID-19 support here: <https://www.icf.com/insights/covid-19>