

It's time to set the record straight on the way we used federal funds to expand public health services and support core public services during the pandemic.

To date, the County has allocated \$72 million in Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) money and approved \$16 million in grants for Health Services to combat the pandemic for items such as increased testing, contact tracing, business navigators, additional Public Health staff, public outreach, education and preparations for community vaccination clinics for influenza and the COVID-19 vaccine, once it is available.

There's a misconception that some of the Department of Health Services' funding requests were turned down. The County CRF committee did not deny any of their funding requests. As the CRF committee received Health Services' requests, they were either approved for CRF funding or the department was instructed to utilize funding sources such as FEMA, Project Homekey or other state or federal assistance. This allowed the County to maximize its CRF allocation and use other federal program grants appropriately to address the pandemic.

The County also allocated \$37 million to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among those experiencing homelessness. This allowed us to secure three motels for 372 rooms that have sheltered 1,091 people experiencing homelessness. Staff provided meals to guests and assisted them with various social services.

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Office did not receive additional funding from the CRF. Consistent with federal guidelines, we used a standard budgeting procedure to allocate \$104 million in restricted CRF funding to the Sheriff Department's budget for eligible payroll and benefits, and immediately withdrew \$104 million in unrestricted General Fund dollars from the Sheriff's Office for use by County departments.

Without this budget procedure to free up General Fund resources, we would have had to make huge reductions in General Fund departments that provide critical services to the community and are on the frontline during this pandemic.

Given Sacramento County's obligation as the social services and public health provider countywide, that wasn't an option any of us were willing to consider. Thankfully, CRF funding allowed us to continue this important work with no interruption in the continuity of these services to the people in the County.

As stated before, the bottom line is this: the County has and will continue to provide Public Health with any funds they need to address the pandemic.