

Special Support Activity Reference Guide

Overview

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) received \$37.5 million in State General Funds (SGF) to expand the California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) for 2022-23 and ongoing, which includes \$33.7 million for Local Assistance. Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) may use the new SFG expansion funds for state fiscal year (SFY) 2022/23 in one or more for the following three categories: immediate expansion, planning, and/or special support activities per the Scope of Work (SOW).

This guidance provides details about allowable expense for the special support activities. SGF expansion funds used for special support activities aim to provide pandemic relief and support with rebuilding and stabilizing local MCAH home visiting programs throughout California. Local MCAH home visiting programs include evidence-based or innovative home visiting and case management that serves expectant parents and caregivers of young children to support them through stages of pregnancy and/or early stages of raising a family. LHJs can use this new SGF funding to support staff and families served by local MCAH home visiting programs regardless of funding source and model type, including subcontractors of local MCAH home visiting programs and CHVP-funded Innovation projects.

The following categories are allowed under special support activities.

- Hazard pay or other additional staff costs
- Home visitor training
- Technology
- Emergency supplies

The use of SGF funding for special support activities is intended to provide short-term relief to help stabilize home visiting programs with the longer-term goal of increasing the number of families served in home visiting. CDPH/CHVP will provide additional guidance about parameters and duration of these allowable activities. LHJs must report on the use of funds for special support activities per the SOW.

Note: In Year 1, LHJs are encouraged to plan for and begin expansion of the CHVP evidence-based home visiting models, Healthy Family America, Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers. There are no restrictions on the amount of funding that can be used for special support activities. LHJs will decide how to utilize the new SGF funding in SFY 2022/23 based on the needs of their program and in accordance with the SOW. In Years 2-6, there will be restrictions on special support activities.

Below are descriptions of each special support activity funding category with examples of approved expenditures for each.

Allowable Usage of CHVP SGF funds for Special Support Activities

Hazard Pay or Other Additional Staff Costs

This funding category includes costs associated with hazard pay and other staff costs related to providing home visits or the administration of local MCAH home visiting programs.

Examples of “hazard pay or other additional staff costs”:

- Additional compensation for performing hazardous duty or work involving physical hardship

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- Additional staff costs, such as incentive or overtime pay
- Costs associated with staff performing duties in support of service delivery while teleworking, such as for remote access (monitors, hot spots, data plans, keyboards, webcams, etc.)
- Technology purchases for local MCAH home visiting staff
- Outreach for participant retention and recruitment, such as to increase awareness of home visiting programs services and referrals
- Work to support home visiting programs centralized/coordinated intake systems
- Activities to support community engagement
- Purchase of personal protective equipment

Considerations for hazard pay or additional staff costs:

- Funding for special support activities may not be used to pay for staff salaries as the use of this funding is short-term.

Home Visiting Staff Training

This funding category includes costs associated with developing, conducting, and evaluating training for local MCAH home visiting staff.

Training topics might include:

- Best practices for conducting virtual home visits
- Emergency preparedness and response planning for families
- Safely conducting screenings and responding to concerns related to intimate partner violence, mental health, child development, etc.
- Safety and planning for families served to improve family outcomes
- Trainings on reflective supervision or reflective practice are allowable as a training cost
- Mental health first aid or other maternal and child mental health trainings
- Cultural humility training that improves awareness and knowledge of discrimination and racial disparity, including education and awareness of implicit biases and how these biases negatively impact people of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and others (LGBTQ+) communities, women, and girls
- Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) training by a qualified trainer with knowledge of the specific needs of the LGBTQ+ community
- Best practices relating to cultural competence/humility, SOGIE, and LGBTQ+ equitable services
- Trauma informed approaches
- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and positive childhood experience (PCEs)
- Motivational Interviewing
- Positive parent-child and family interaction and child abuse prevention

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Considerations for home visiting staff training:

- Additional training topics may be approved on a case-by-case basis. LHJs must submit a written request to CHVP and include rationale for how the training supports families served by local MCAH home visiting programs.
- Training can be provided to all local MCAH home visiting staff.
- Home visiting staff training does not include training for families.

Technology

This funding category includes costs associated with acquiring the necessary technological means for supporting family participation in local MCAH home visiting programs.

Examples of “technology”:

- Tablets, laptops, and cell phones to enable families served by local MCAH home visiting programs to participate in virtual home visits
- Necessary auxiliary supplies, such as prepaid phone cards and/or data plans, chargers, mobile hot spots to support internet access, and program-specific software

Considerations for technology costs:

- Consider anticipated allowable costs after initial technology purchases, such as additional phone cards and data plans, and replacement items for lost or broken supplies.
- Funds cannot be used for IT-related expenditures, such as infrastructure improvements to systems that are not related to local MCAH home visiting programs.
- LHJs should have a comprehensive mechanism for tracking and documenting technology provided to families served by local MCAH home visiting programs.

Emergency Supplies

This funding category includes costs associated with emergency supplies for families served by local MCAH home visiting programs. Should an LHJ choose to budget funds for emergency supplies, they may consider coordinating with a local diaper bank. Examples of emergency supplies are shown below.

Examples of “emergency supplies”:

- Diapers and diapering supplies, including diaper wipes and diaper cream, necessary to ensure that a child using a diaper is properly cleaned and protected from diaper rash
- Infant formula
- Food and water
- Hand soap and hand sanitizer
- COVID-19 at-home testing kits
- Personal protective equipment necessary to participate in home visits for families and home visiting staff, including face masks
- Gas cards, taxi vouchers, or other travel vouchers are allowable to families served by local MCAH home visiting programs. Examples include grocery store trips and transportation to attend well-child or pre-or-post natal visits
- Gift cards, including prepaid grocery cards, for families served by local MCAH home visiting programs to purchase emergency supplies

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Considerations for emergency supplies costs:

- Additional types of emergency supplies may be approved on a case-by-case basis. LHJs must submit a written request to CHVP and include rationale for how the types of emergency supplies support families served by local MCAH home visiting programs.
- Funding may not be used to create a local diaper bank.
- The use of gift cards and prepaid grocery cards necessitate policies and procedures to safeguard against the risk of theft. LHJs must develop policies and procedures to ensure these safeguards.
- Gift cards and prepaid grocery cards may not be used for unallowable purposes, such as for the purchase of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis products or firearms.
- Gift cards and prepaid grocery cards must only be provided to families served by local MCAH home visiting programs.
- LHJs must obtain a signed CHVP Gift Card Attestation form by the families served by local MCAH home visiting programs acknowledging and agreeing to the purposes and restrictions on prepaid grocery card use.
- All supplies, including gift cards and prepaid grocery cards, must be purchased and distributed during the fiscal year as carry over is not allowable.
- The collection of usage information (such as receipts) from families is not encouraged or required.