



Update on Wildfires

Multiple fires burned throughout Los Angeles County in January 2025, and although they have been contained, we know the impacts will be long-lasting. Air quality remains a concern, particularly due to the ongoing risks of windblown dust and ash. Water quality issues remain in areas impacted by wildfires. Thousands of homes and other structures have been lost. Los Angeles County departments, including Sheriff, Fire, Office of Emergency Management, Public Works, and Public Health, work together to provide comprehensive services so those affected by the wildfires have the necessary information.

Once local officials have cleared the area and allowed entry, individuals entering previously evacuated or fire-damaged areas should take precautions to protect their health and safety.

For comprehensive information on active wildfires and services the County of Los Angeles provides, visit <https://www.lacounty.gov/emergency/>.

Los Angeles County Post-Fire Air, Soil and Water Assessment Plan

The Los Angeles County Post-Fire Air, Soil, and Water Assessment Plan outlines ongoing environmental assessments conducted by government agencies and academic institutions in wildfire areas. This plan is updated weekly, and findings are publicly available to inform residents about potential health and safety risks. It includes evaluating air quality, soil contamination, and water safety to assess the impact of fire-related pollutants. Additionally, the plan provides guidance on precautions residents can take to minimize exposure to ash, soot, and fire debris. For further inquiries, contact information is provided within the plan.

For more information on the Los Angeles County Post-Fire Air, Soil and Water Assessment Plan, visit: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/wildfire/post_fire_assessment_plan.htm

Ocean Water Quality Advisory for All Los Angeles County Beaches

Rain Advisory

Due to current rainfall, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health advises beach users to avoid all water contact, especially near discharging storm drains, creeks, and rivers, due to potentially higher bacteria levels in these areas. This includes any runoff that may flow onto or pond on the beach sand.

Ocean and bay recreational waters, especially near discharging storm drains, creeks, and rivers, can be contaminated with bacteria, chemicals, debris, trash, and other public health hazards from city streets and mountain areas after rainfall. Individuals who enter the water in these areas could become ill. Rain advisories remain in effect for 72 hours after the rainfall

ends. The ocean water quality rain advisory will be in effect until **11:00 a.m. Monday, February 17, 2025**. This advisory may be extended depending on further rainfall.

Ocean Water Advisory Due to Fire Impacts

Once the rain advisory is lifted, the ocean water advisory from Las Flores State Beach to Santa Monica State Beach will remain in effect until further notice.

Beachgoers may recreate on the sand but are advised to stay away from fire debris and to stay out of the ocean water during any posted ocean advisory.

Recorded information on beach conditions is available 24- hours a day on the County's beach closure hotline: 1-800- 525-5662. To view a map of impacted locations and for more information, please visit: PublicHealth.LACounty.gov/Beach/ If you have any questions, please contact Los Angeles County of Public Health at (626) 430-5360

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month is an opportunity to educate and raise awareness about the prevalence and impact of teen dating violence. Dating/domestic violence (DV) is abuse that occurs with a current or former spouse or dating partner. DV and intimate partner violence (IPV) encompasses a range of behaviors that include physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, psychological abuse, and economic control. These behaviors may occur in tandem, resulting in destructive, harmful effects on individuals, families, and communities.

Each year, approximately 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner. In fact, teen dating violence affects one in three adolescents in the U.S., a rate higher than other forms of youth violence. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that nearly 1 in 11 female and 1 in 15 male high school students report experiencing physical dating violence, while 1 in 9 female and 1 in 36 male high school students report experiencing sexual dating violence. However, teen dating violence extends beyond physical abuse to include coercion, stalking, emotional manipulation, online harassment, and financial control.

The consequences of teen dating violence are significant. Experiencing abuse during adolescence increases the risk of future victimization or perpetration in adulthood. Affected teens are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. They are also at higher risk for engaging in harmful behaviors, such as substance abuse, and may exhibit antisocial tendencies, including lying, bullying, and aggression. Recognizing these warning signs is critical in providing timely intervention and support.ⁱ

Dating and domestic violence are public health issues that transcend race, religion, education level, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. Certain populations, including LGBTQ+ youth, gender-nonconforming individuals, and female-identifying students, face higher rates of physical and sexual dating violence and often encounter greater barriers to accessing safety and resources. Addressing this crisis requires a survivor-centered approach, ensuring that prevention and intervention efforts are inclusive, trauma-informed, and accessible to all.

It is important that we continue to advocate for awareness, education, and take proactive measures to combat teen dating violence and support the well-being of young people in our communities.

For more information on how to get involved this Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month visit: <https://www.loveisrespect.org/get-involved/tdvam/>.

Student Wellbeing Centers

Since 2019, Public Health has operated Student Wellbeing Centers (SWC) at over 40 LA County high schools, creating safe spaces on school campuses where students can receive the health-affirming services and support they need to lead healthy lives.

School-based SWC provides students access to essential health-affirming services to support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. These centers offer a safe and welcoming environment where students can engage with caring professionals, supportive peers, and integrated services to foster lifelong protective health practices. Through educational programming, the Centers empower students with knowledge in social-emotional wellness, leadership development, and sexual health, equipping them with the skills necessary to lead healthy lives.

One of the SWC critical focus areas is addressing teen mental health by promoting awareness of teen dating violence (TDV) and fostering skills for healthy relationships. Through classroom sessions led by trained Youth Educators, students learn about their rights and responsibilities in relationships, the importance of mutual decision-making and respectful communication, and how to recognize healthy and unhealthy behaviors. Individual support is also available to guide students through personal experiences and equip them with effective communication and boundary-setting tools.

To reinforce these lessons, informational posters on healthy relationships are displayed throughout campuses, sparking meaningful discussions about relationship dynamics, warning signs, and strategies for fostering respectful partnerships. Many locations also provide printed resources to help students identify signs of TDV and access support services when needed. Recognizing the interconnectedness of mental health, relationships, and overall well-being, Wellbeing Center staff play a pivotal role in facilitating these critical conversations and ensuring students can access the necessary resources.

Beyond individualized support, the SWC engages the broader school community through campus-wide outreach initiatives such as health fairs and awareness campaigns. In recognition of Valentine's Day, several schools host lunchtime workshops on Healthy Relationships, integrating interactive elements such as crafting activities, positive affirmations, and self-care exercises. These events, which include de-stressing activities like Zen Garden sessions, coloring, and grounding exercises, provide students with opportunities to reflect on healthy relationship dynamics while engaging in wellness-promoting activities.

SWC plays an essential role in promoting student health, safety, and success by fostering a culture of awareness, education, and proactive support.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.lacoe.edu/services/student-support/mental-health>

LA County Medi-Cal Doula Hub

A doula provides emotional support, physical comfort, education, and advocacy to birthing people throughout their perinatal journey, including during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum, miscarriage, or abortion. Research has shown that, compared to those who did not have a support person, those who received support from a [doula had better maternal and infant health outcomes, including fewer medical interventions, lower likelihood of low birth weight, and increased satisfaction with their labor experience](#). Doula care is a preventative strategy, which may be [especially vital for birthing people who identify as Black and/or Indigenous, who face the largest disparities in maternal health outcomes](#) as a result of systemic and multi-generational racism.

On January 1, 2023, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) added full-spectrum doula services as a covered benefit for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. Learn more about the benefits available [here](#). This is a huge win for families in Los Angeles County, [as 42% of the over 90,000 annual births in the County are covered by Medi-Cal](#). A large doula workforce is needed to support these thousands of births yearly.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is collaborating with a selected lead community agency, Frontline Doulas, in partnership with [Diversity Uplifts, Inc.](#), to implement [The Los Angeles County Medi-Cal Doula Hub](#) (The Doula Hub). The County and philanthropic partners jointly fund the Doula Hub and comes in response to a unanimously approved 2023 [Board of Supervisors motion](#) directing the Department of Public Health, the Department of Health Services, and the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative to develop a hub to support an equitable Medi-Cal doula benefit rollout, free of barriers for both doulas and birthing families. Their mission is to educate, connect, and advocate for doulas, families, and communities so that any Medi-Cal beneficiary who desires the affirming support of full-spectrum doula care can receive it.

To achieve this mission, The Doula Hub will expand and strengthen the doula workforce of Los Angeles County by offering new doula training, informational webinars on the Medi-Cal doula provider application process, connecting doulas to legal and billing support, and informing a broad audience about the Medi-Cal doula benefit and doula care. The Doula Hub has five focus areas:

1. New Doula Training and Health Care System Integration
2. Communications and Public Awareness to Doulas, Medi-Cal Members, and Providers
3. Medi-Cal Technical Assistance for Doulas (applications, contracting, billing, etc.)
4. Workforce and Organizational Development Training for Established Doulas
5. Evaluation of the Hub Model and its implementation in Los Angeles County

Additionally, The Doula Hub will convene a quarterly Doula Hub Advisory Council, consisting of doulas, health plans, clinicians, partners, and advocates throughout the county. Through this Council, we will advance all five focus areas and troubleshoot barriers to equitable and efficient implementation of the Medi-Cal benefit.

Service Planning Area 8 Update February 2025

The Doula Hub is an additional perinatal health effort within Public Health's Division of Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health, alongside the [African American Infant and Maternal Mortality Prevention Initiative](#) (AAIMM) direct service doula programs. This work represents our commitment to addressing the root causes of disparities in infant and perinatal health outcomes. Like AAIMM, The Doula Hub applies a reproductive and birth justice lens and centers community voices in decision-making processes.

For help finding a doula, please visit: <https://www.blackinfantsandfamilies.org/doulas>

Help Me Grow – Parent Café Event

The **Curtis Tucker Center for Community Wellness**, in collaboration with **Help Me Grow** will host a Parent Café Event on **Saturday, March 1, 2025, from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM** at 123 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90301.

This event is designed to support parents of children with special healthcare needs by fostering meaningful discussions, sharing valuable information, and building a strong, supportive community. It will provide a welcoming space for parents to connect, exchange experiences, and access resources related to child development and special care needs.

^[1] National Domestic Violence Hotline. February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofvps/outreach-material/february-national-teen-dating-violence-awareness-month-tdvam>.