

STAND TOGETHER CONTRA COSTA
A Project Status Report Submitted to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
July 10, 2018

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

First imagined only a year ago, over the course of just 12 months Stand Together Contra Costa has emerged as a shining example of the power of collective leadership and shared purpose to redress an inequitable reality.

Spurred by the early, urgent recognition of the threats posed by the federal government's frightening and destabilizing anti-immigrant policies and threatening behaviors – threats that have only grown more draconian in recent months – Contra Costa County's elected officials, nonprofit organizations, funding partners, and community leaders have collectively demonstrated extraordinary commitment, creativity, and integrity in launching this ambitious and important example of true public/private/community partnership.

To this end, the mission of Stand Together Contra Costa is to ensure that all people in Contra Costa County, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, are afforded the rights established by the United States Constitution and are protected from actions or policies that result in disparate, discriminatory, or unlawful treatment.

Stand Together Contra Costa provides no-cost rapid-response support, civil deportation defense legal services and clinics, immigrant rights education and training, and direct-service support for immigrant individuals and families in Contra Costa County.

A public-private initiative managed by the Office of the Public Defender in partnership with nonprofit organizations and community members, Stand Together Contra Costa's pilot phase spans January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2020.

Catholic Charities of the East Bay (CCEB), as lead of a coalition of seven nonprofit agencies, is the project's primary community-based partner; CCEB was selected through the County's rigorous competitive bidding process.

II. THE ORIGIN OF STAND TOGETHER CONTRA COSTA: A BRIEF HISTORY

In early 2017, in response to a wave of increasingly harsh immigration-related policies and practices emerging under the new Presidential administration, a coalition of community stakeholders formed the Contra Costa Immigrant Rights Alliance (CCIRA).

Given intensified federal deportation efforts both nationally and locally, CCIRA advocated that Contra Costa County implement a new initiative to support, advocate for, and protect the County's immigrant families.

In quick response to these community concerns, on May 9, 2017, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors referred to the Finance Committee for review and consideration this request to establish an immigrant rights initiative.

At its meeting on June 26, 2017, the Finance Committee invited CCIRA to develop and submit a full proposal, including budget and commitments for external funding, for consideration by that Committee. Following this direction, and in partnership with the Office of the Public Defender, CCIRA designed a rapid-response deportation-defense initiative entitled Stand Together Contra Costa. At its August 2017 meeting, the Finance Committee received the proposal to establish Stand Together Contra Costa and recommended it for adoption by the full Board of Supervisors.

On September 19, 2017 the Board of Supervisors received and discussed the proposal, including funding commitments by philanthropic organizations. Having reviewed the proposal, the Board unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and to commit \$500,000 in County funds for FY 17/18, with continuing commitments in FY 18/19 and FY 19/20, contingent on ongoing contributions by external funders.

III. KEY COMPONENTS

A. COMMUNITY VERIFICATION AND RESPONSE

The backbone of Stand Together Contra Costa is the Rapid Response Hotline, which is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide a single point of contact for people who witness or are targeted by federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions undertaken in our community.

Hotline staff verify ICE activity or dispel rumors, dispatch legal observers, provide accompaniment to family members to gather information to support legal defense for a person detained by ICE, and coordinate with the project's deportation-defense attorneys for individuals in bond and removal proceedings.

B. LEGAL SERVICES (CLINICS, CONSULTATIONS, AND REMOVAL-DEFENSE REPRESENTATION)

Stand Together Contra Costa conducts no-cost legal clinics in safe and familiar community settings to provide immigrants and their families with individualized legal consultations and structured and customized referrals.

Individuals detained by ICE are eligible to receive no-cost legal representation in pursuing bond or release, and to receive legal representation in removal defense and applications for relief before the Executive Office of Immigration Review (immigration court).

C. CAPACITY-BUILDING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH

Stand Together Contra Costa provides a wide array of no-cost informational presentations, public forums, train-the-trainer sessions, direct-service workshops, and leadership development opportunities, along with public communications about immigration-related issues to expand knowledge, dispel myths, and enhance both individual and collective capacity.

IV. PROGRESS TO DATE

A. PRE-LAUNCH & CONTRACTING

Following approval by the Board of Supervisors in September 2017, the Office of the Public Defender executed a variety of activities necessary to the project's launch: Retaining technical assistance necessary to undertake a project of this complexity and on an extremely accelerated timeline; preparing and releasing a Request for Proposals for community-based services and recruiting a panel of expert reviewers; selecting and contracting with a lead agency; forming and convening an initial ad hoc committee to develop the foundational structures for the Steering Committee, recruit Steering Committee members, and draft operating guidelines; hiring and orienting the administrative analyst assigned to the project; negotiating agreements to secure the technological infrastructure for the hotline; executing grant agreements with funders; identifying data methods and metrics; and selecting a lead agency responsible for implementing the project's services.

With an effective date of January 1, 2018, Catholic Charities' contract allowed a two-month start-up period to execute contracts with all of its subcontractors; recruit and orient new-hires; develop foundational protocols for responders, legal observers, and trainers; identify key elements of data and metrics; build out the data-system infrastructure necessary to collect and analyze data; and hire and train dispatchers on the hotline infrastructure, data-gathering and entry protocols, and dispatch procedures.

B. EARLY IMPLEMENTATION: SUBSTANTIAL SUCCESS ON AN ACCELERATED TIMELINE

Stand Together Contra Costa County launched its rapid-response hotline on March 1, 2018. Over the four months since, Stand Together Contra Costa has achieved all of the following:

i. Information and Dispatch

- Instituted the 24/7 hotline (phone and data system): 925-900-5151
- Fielded 1,008 calls
- Reported, observed, verified 19 incidents of reported ICE activity
- Recruited and trained 108 volunteers as legal observers operating throughout the County

ii. Governance and Communications

- Established website: <https://standtogethercontracosta.org>, with a repository of videos and accessible, downloadable documents in multiple languages, along with a calendar of upcoming events
- Established Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StandTogetherContraCosta>
- Designed, printed, and distributed bilingual Know Your Rights cards
- Produced Know Your Rights documents in Arabic, English, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish, traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, and Urdu
- Recruited and convened Steering Committee, conducting monthly governance meetings

iii. Education, Leadership Development, and Capacity-Building

- Conducted 14 trainings in legal observation, training 246 people
- Conducted 26 Know Your Rights workshops, educating 581 people in immigration rights
- Conducted five informational presentations about immigration and the program, informing 85 people
- Conducted five Immigration Forums, reaching 203 people
- Conducted three Train the Trainer events, building immigration-related capacity for 24 representatives from community-based organizations
- Hired eight bilingual rapid response dispatchers and three bilingual community leaders
- Hired two full-time deportation-defense attorneys

iv. Outreach

- Provided informational materials to all 36 Catholic parishes in Contra Costa County
- Provided informational materials to Muslim mosques, Jewish temples, and ecumenical faith-based organizations in Contra Costa County
- Provide informational materials and established contacts with dozens of schools in multiple school districts across Contra Costa County
- Developing plan with community college district to increase information and services for their students and families

v. Legal Services and Consultation

- Conducted 582 immigration consultations
- Completed 35 intakes for legal representation
- Represented/representing 20 people in bond and removal proceedings
- Provided monthly informational presentations for ICE detainees in West County Detention Facility, reaching 513 detained immigrants

V. EMERGING LESSONS

A. THE NEED FOR STAND TOGETHER CONTRA COSTA IS REAL.

In the four months since its launch, it has become crystal clear that Stand Together Contra Costa is meeting an urgent, surging imperative in our county, providing rapid, responsive, reliable, trustworthy, and culturally appropriate services to an underrepresented and vulnerable population while building the county's capacity to recognize and respond to the needs of our county's immensely valuable immigrant families.

Given the increasingly horrifying policies and actions being executed by the federal government – explicit policies that pull babies from their parents' arms, intentionally and egregiously tearing families apart with no regard for their safety or reunification, impulsively declaring the intention to open a modern-day internment camp literally in our backyards – Stand Together Contra Costa has served as a beacon of hope for the tens of thousands of immigrant residents who are inextricably woven into the fabric of our county.

In its first four months of operations, Stand Together Contra Costa has achieved remarkable strides. The program has supplanted rumors with facts, reduced confusion by establishing a hub of information and support, enhanced coordination and capacity among a coalition of nonprofit organizations committed to a collective effort, and

deepened the county's technical resources to provide due process legal protections for people who otherwise have had nowhere to turn.

By unanimously approving the plan to establish Stand Together Contra Costa, and to commit partial funding to support this effort, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors demonstrated invaluable leadership. Without that timely and responsive commitment, Stand Together Contra Costa could not have emerged and flourished so quickly. It is equally true that Stand Together Contra Costa could not exist, were it not for the proactive determination and commitment of our remarkable philanthropic partners and nonprofit community.

B. STAND TOGETHER CONTRA COSTA HELPS ALL OF US.

Stand Together Contra Costa exists first and foremost in order to provide essential, high-quality, and no-cost services and support to protect our immigrant neighbors and families.

But in the few short months of the project's existence, we have discovered that Stand Together Contra Costa also meets newly urgent needs that have emerged for the larger community as well. In the midst of the shocking new federal practices, Stand Together Contra Costa has come to provide a forum and opportunity for action for fair-minded Contra Costa residents and leaders who want to take a stand – indeed, to stand together – to support, protect, and advocate for equity and due process for all people in Contra Costa County.

C. PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IS POWERFUL. PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IS VALUABLE.

Per the plan presented to and approved by the Board of Supervisors, the Office of the Public Defender serves as the administrative authority and manager for Stand Together Contra Costa. In the months since the Board's approval of the plan, the value of locating this initiative inside the county's administrative infrastructure has been unmistakable.

Stand Together Contra Costa is a complex undertaking: Born of grassroots advocacy, it is funded by both the public sector and philanthropic entities, authorized by the county's leadership, administratively managed by the Public Defender's Office, conducted in integral partnership with community-based organizations, and stewarded by government representatives and community advocates alike.

It is certainly not easy to design, launch, or manage such a complex structure; having fewer moving parts makes a machine easier to run. But the success of Stand Together Contra Costa is a product of the commitment, capacity, and connections brought to the project by its many constituent members. By embedding management of this complex structure into the institutional framework intrinsic to a public department, the county Board of Supervisors offered the project a level of legitimacy, rigor, visibility, impact, and accountability that might otherwise have taken far longer to achieve.

D. COLLECTIVE STEWARDSHIP BRINGS VOICES TO THE TABLE.

Stand Together Contra Costa is a testament to the power of dedication, partnership, and inclusion, embodied in the project's Steering Committee of representative leaders who volunteer their time to support this work.

The Steering Committee was constituted in January, recruited in February, convened in March, and has met monthly since then, providing stewardship, critical inquiry, and collective wisdom to explore what's working, what needs adjustment, and what it takes to accomplish the project's important and ambitious mission.

At its June meeting, the Steering Committee received a year-end report offering key findings and recommendation to improve elements of coordination, operational consistency and efficiency, roles and responsibilities, communication, data-sharing, costs, and budgets for Year 2, which are summarized in Section E, below.

E. LOOKING AHEAD TO YEAR TWO: ADJUSTMENTS ARE NORMAL, NECESSARY, AND HELPFUL.

In reviewing Year 1 and planning for Year 2, the Steering Committee and project leaders have identified several opportunities for adjustment:

- i. **Legal Staffing:** It has proven difficult to hire and retain a high-quality Supervising Attorney at the salary level budgeted in the proposal presented by Catholic Charities. In addition, and recognizing the locally chilling economic, social, and public safety effects of federal immigration policies, many counties are now

establishing deportation-defense positions in their public defender offices, thereby increasing the demand for such attorneys and making it difficult for the project to fill this position. As a result, the project's partners have had to fill this gap on an ad hoc basis, which is not sustainable. In light of this difficulty, the Steering Committee has directed the project leads to identify potential new solutions, which may include increasing the line-item budget allocated for this position and locating the position in the Public Defender's Office rather than on staff at a community-based organization. These changes would substantially enhance the project's ability to recruit and retain a qualified senior deportation-defense attorney.

- ii. **Support Staffing/Hotline Coverage:** The staffed, 24/7 rapid-response hotline is the cornerstone of Stand Together Contra Costa, serving as the hub for information, verification, and service dispatch. Yet staffing such a line 24/7 through both peak periods and slow times is challenging, in terms of both costs and shift-coverage. Given this fact, the Steering Committee has directed the project leads to explore options for ensuring adequate and appropriate coverage while reducing both cost and staff burden. To this end, the project leads are beginning to explore options to partner with other networks to establish shared peak-period and overnight call coverage. This option seems feasible, because all of the networks share the same technological platform. Further, such inter-regional planning and resource-sharing can enhance collective capacity while providing useful leverage to each of the partner agencies,
- iii. **Multi-Partner Launch and Accelerated Schedule:** It is a bold expression of urgent moral necessity to fund, recruit, contract, coordinate, and launch a multi-agency, public/private, county-wide start-up initiative on an ambitious six-month timeline. Given the project's complexity, and thanks in large part to the commitment of leaders and stakeholders at every level, Stand Together Contra Costa has been an astonishing success. However, it also comes as no surprise that there are multiple opportunities for adjustment as we encounter Year 2. The Steering Committee is currently working with the project leads to identify, specify, and quantify the cost of such changes. We are in the process of developing a revised operational plan and budget for Year 2 and will report the Steering Committee's recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in July.
- iv. **Local Leadership Councils:** Given the complexity of start-up, including hiring, training, and services, we have not yet convened the three Local Leadership Councils. This element is a priority for Q1 of Year 2, and our goal is to recruit and convene these councils by August of this year.

VI. BUDGET AS APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Sources	FY17-18 (six months)	FY18-19	FY19-20
Nonprofit Philanthropies	\$85,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Contra Costa County	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Total sources	\$585,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Uses			
Public Defender	\$82,300	\$84,300	\$76,800
Legal and Community Services	\$491,843	\$979,285	\$979,991
Total uses	\$574,143	\$1,063,585	\$1,056,791
Over/under	\$10,857	-\$63,585	-\$56,791

For its first term (January 1, 2018-June 30, 2018), Stand Together Contra Costa is operating on a total budget of \$574,143. Of this, the Office of the Public Defender, as the project's administrative manager, retains \$82,300 to underwrite the cost of one full-time administrative analyst and a set of operational items, including the hotline infrastructure, contract supervision, and communications.

The balance of the project's first-year budget – \$491,843 – serves to underwrite a contract with Catholic Charities of the East Bay (CCEB), as lead agency for a collaborative of seven community-based organizations: CCEB, Bay Area Community Resources, Centro Legal, International Institute of the Bay Area, Jewish Family & Community Services, Oakland Community Organizations, and Monument Impact.

To date, the project is operating within the available funding for Year 1. We are deeply grateful for the funding commitments made by both Contra Costa County and our extraordinary coalition of philanthropic partners for Year 2.

However, and as was indicated in the proposal submitted to and approved by the Board of Supervisors in September 2017, the budgets for Year 2 and Year 3 are not fully covered by committed funding. In addition, and as described in Section V.E, above, we are considering various staffing and operational adjustments for Year 2, which will likely have some effect on budget.

Once the Steering Committee and project leads have completed this review and analysis, we will provide the Board of Supervisors with an update on the project and its budget and funding.

VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

In a remarkably short period of time, Contra Costa County has accomplished an extraordinary collective achievement. And given the intensifying measures being deployed by the federal administration, marked by confusion, reversals, and national debate, the existence of Stand Together Contra Costa is even more important than it was imagined to be even a year ago.

As we begin Year 2 of this collective endeavor, we are deeply committed to excellence, transparency, and ongoing partnership among the county's grassroots coalitions, nonprofit and faith-based partners, public agencies, and elected leaders. It is with gratitude, humility, and unwavering dedication that we submit to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors this report on the project's first six months.