

Budget Proposal - Addressing Diaper Need in California

Overview

The nonprofit SupplyBank.org is proposing a **state budget allocation of \$30 million over three years** for diaper and wipe distribution in the 2022-2023 Budget.

This critical investment will expand the existing Diaper Bank Program to provide a statewide reach through existing efforts administered by SupplyBank.org. This expansion will provide diapers to families in need, create jobs for the families it serves, and improve the State's ability to respond to emergency supply needs during disasters. The design of this proposal is to supplement the existing Diaper Bank Program established by the Legislature by Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez in 2018 and expanded to eight counties in 2021. The current Diaper Bank Program allocates \$30 million over three years to diaper banks in San Diego, Los Angeles, Orange, Fresno, San Francisco, Sacramento, Sonoma, and San Bernardino. The design of this proposal is to create a complete 58-county statewide approach.

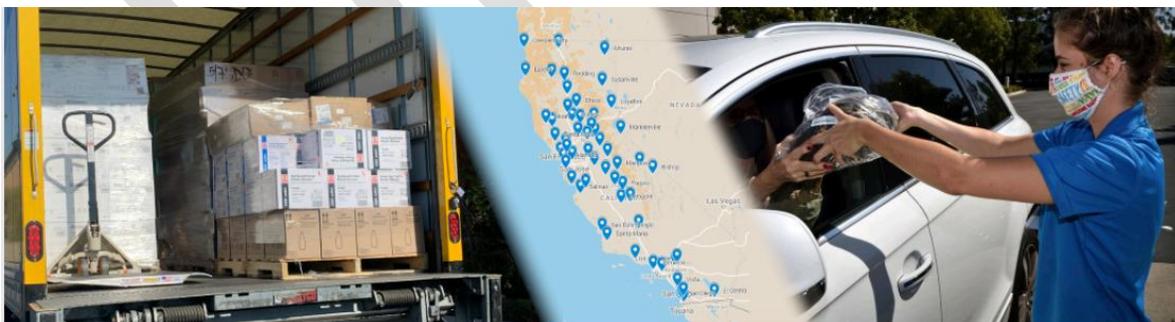
Diaper Need

Prior to the Pandemic, "Diaper Need," or an insufficient supply of diapers to keep babies clean and dry, afflicted 1 in 3 mothers in the United States. Diapers for one child can cost up to \$80 a month, making diapers the third or fourth greatest cost burden for many families on CalWORKs after rent, food and sometimes transportation. With a pre-pandemic average of *40,000 emergency room and inpatient visits* related to diaper need annually in California, this issue causes severe health consequences for babies and significant costs to the state.



Diapers are also a requirement for most childcare providers, making diaper need a barrier to affordable childcare and thus employment. Since the first local Public Health order on March 16, 2020, the need for diaper assistance has grown dramatically and persisted at record levels.

COVID-19 Response: Diapers, Wipes and PPE - A 58 County Program When it is Needed Most



In February of 2020, SupplyBank.org started to coordinate with agencies that foresaw the shortages in essential supplies to come. From March of 2020 through present, SupplyBank.org continues to work with Cal-OES, County EOCs, FEMA, First 5 California and 58 county commissions, Community Services and Development, several dozen County Resource and Referral Networks, 40 Community Service Action Agencies, 100 Local Education Agencies and several others to administer 58 county emergency supplies programs. Each ongoing county program includes diapers and wipes.

SupplyBank.org’s Work on Diaper Need

This effort was possible because it built on SupplyBank.org’s promising outcomes of addressing diaper need through its model of distributing through hundreds of partnering agencies with clients in need. From 2016 through early 2020, SupplyBank.org worked with several philanthropic partners, First 5 California, 16 counties, their First 5 Commissions, and others throughout California to develop an efficient, scalable and nimble program that assists thousands of families from Humboldt to the Inland Empire. First 5 was initially chosen as a partner because of their purpose which in part includes, “to create a comprehensive and integrated delivery system of information and services to promote early childhood development,” making their 20+ years of institutional knowledge at the local level of existing programs where diaper and wipe distribution could be integrated unrivaled.



Integration into Existing Programming is Key

These 16 county pilots demonstrated that integration of diaper and wipe distribution into existing programs identified by local Commissions such as WIC, Family Resource Centers, CalWORKs home visitation and other home visitation programs and many others, enabled a program to be established quickly, administered efficiently and reinforced relationships between social workers and their clients. The most common feedback was from evaluations was that the diaper program incentivized other valuable programming with a “leg up” approach, as opposed to another “handout line.”

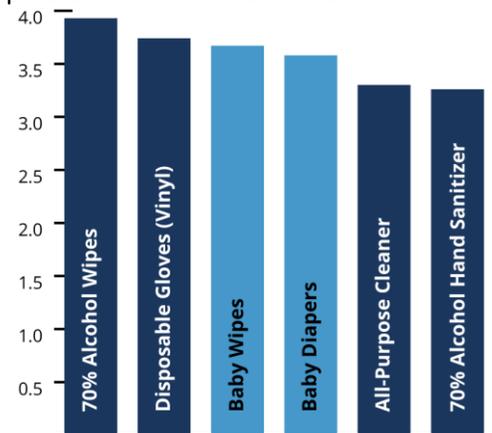
2019 Statewide “Diaper Needs” Assessment

Prior to the Pandemic, to assess diaper need in every county and outline what a program to address it would like, SupplyBank.org worked with all County First 5 Agencies and allied agencies. *The Statewide Diaper Need Assessment*, included a report on each County Commissions’ existing efforts to end diaper need (if any), programs that could incorporate a diaper need assistance component and challenges for program implementation and solutions. Immediately following the conclusion of this report in early 2020, the Pandemic tested the programmatic statewide model outlined in the report. As stated, it has been instrumental in providing thousands of agencies and childcare providers with critical resources to reduce community spread of the Virus.

February 2021 Emergency Supplies Needs Assessment “Diapers and wipes are needed as much as PPE!”

Completed in February of 2021, our most recent 58 county emergency supplies assessment for young children and families resulted with nearly all counties ranking the need for diapers and wipes at the second highest or highest level of need.

Priority Level
5 = Urgent need
4 = High need
3 = Moderate need
2 = Low need
1 = Not needed

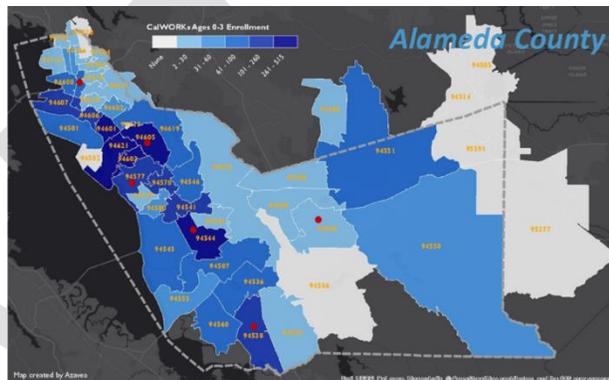


Above are the top rated items by demand for the 58 County Emergency Supplies Program administered by First 5 California and SupplyBank.Org. Diapers and Wipes were second only to alcohol wipes and disposable gloves.

Program Design and Administration

Consistent with other statewide programs, SupplyBank.org would use an algorithm that includes each county's birth rate as a percentage of the total, add a baseline to ensure smaller counties had a meaningful amount of resources and build out an allocation plan accordingly. SupplyBank.org would work directly with each First 5 County Commission and/or their designated lead agency or agencies to continue existing efforts and modify as needed their county-specific distribution, storage, and delivery plan. As part of SupplyBank.org's normal due diligence, counties would also be provided data highlighting customized public assistance programs geospatial mapping and also existing resources such as the Healthy Places Index to pinpoint communities most in need of support by different metrics. These county-specific plans include a vast network of safety net actors that can collectively reach their respective communities. Local partner types typically include:

- Family Resource Centers
- WIC
- Home visitation programs (CalWORKs and others)
- Resource and Referral Agencies
- County First 5 run centers
- Childcare providers (data to be gathered)
- Homeless and domestic violence shelters
- County Offices of Education for teen parents
- Other agency partners



This map shows CalWORKs enrollment for 0-3 year olds by zip code in Alameda County. SupplyBank.Org created similar maps with other program enrollment metrics for the other 15 county pilots from 2016-2019 to assist in determining program design.

Other Benefits: Jobs, More Resources and Enhanced Disaster Response

Creating and incentivizing other opportunities for the people their programs serve is a central value of SupplyBank.org, which is in part why the Organization integrates distributions through existing programs that provide other benefits. Additionally, SupplyBank.org began to integrate some COVID response deliveries in the Central Valley with a truck driving school and plans to expand the model with this proposal's approval. As evidenced by the evolution of SupplyBank.org's former diaper bank pilots, the Agency will integrate other resources such as period supplies, hygiene kits and other essentials into this program to increase the value to families and continue to utilize this network as a distribution channel that can accommodate emergency needs brought by future disasters. Lastly, as seen below and the previous page, diaper would be branded with award-winning Talk, Read, Sing messaging designed to boost parent-baby interaction and thus brain development during diaper time.

Conclusion: This critical \$30M investment will enhance and continue emergency County efforts already underway to address diaper need in California, while leveraging and strengthening existing safety net investments, creating local jobs and improving emergency disaster response capabilities to vulnerable families, while collaborating with other efforts.

