

TITLE X GRANTEE PROFILE: ESSENTIAL ACCESS HEALTH, CALIFORNIA

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Essential Access Health has served as the primary Title X Family Planning Services grantee in California since Title X was established in 1970. Currently, Essential Access oversees the largest Title X provider network in the country. Its statewide Title X network includes 47 subrecipient agencies that provide comprehensive family planning services, collectively operating 238 service sites in 20 out of 58 California counties in collaboration with, sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention partners, formalized partnerships with nontraditional referral sources, community groups, and faith and community-based education and outreach organizations. This robust network served more than 600,000 clients in 2019.

One of the strongest predictors of unintended pregnancy risk is the county a person resides in, and in California, counties with the highest rates of teen births are predominantly rural. Teens in rural areas are less likely than urban teens to receive family planning services due to a limited number of healthcare providers, and rural clients often travel much farther than their urban counterparts to access family planning care. Recognizing the need for expanding access to family services in areas with the highest teen birth rates, Essential Access has worked to welcome new Title X providers in rural regions of California, including the Central Valley and Inland Empire.

California's STD crisis also heavily affects rural regions. Essential Access has leveraged funding to support integrated family planning, STD prevention, and substance use disorder treatment in county-based health systems. The grantee works with five Title X STD Prevention Partners to enhance STD clinical services and provide community-based sexual and reproductive health education and outreach activities.

The spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in California and throughout the United States created widespread and unprecedented challenges for members of California's statewide Title X network. Essential Access developed and implemented a rapid response plan to support the capacity of its Title X network to provide high-quality sexual and reproductive healthcare while safe-at-home orders were in effect.

FAST FACTS

HHS Region:	9
Year of initial Title X funding:	1970
Grantee tenure:	50 years
# of subrecipients:	47
# of service sites:	238

Website: [Essential Access](#)

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Poverty rates in California counties range from 11.8 percent in El Dorado to 24.3 percent in Los Angeles.
- In 2016, 26.1 percent of Latinos in California lived in poverty and struggled financially to cover the costs of basic necessities, compared with 18.9 percent of Blacks, 17.6 percent of Asian Americans, and 13.5 percent of Caucasians.

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The response plan included:

- Identifying immediate and emerging needs
- Re-allocating and distributing additional resources to support the delivery of quality family planning services during COVID-19
- Delivering condoms in response to disruptions to the global condom supply chain caused by the pandemic
- Providing regular updates on clinical guidelines and federal and state policies through its weekly wrap-up newsletter
- Providing training and technical assistance, including a webinar series on contraceptive and STD care during the public health emergency

Essential Access also launched an online hub, [Telehealth Essentials for Sexual + Reproductive Health Care](#), giving Title X providers and other partners a wide range of resources to provide clients with time-sensitive, essential health services remotely.

In addition, Essential Access facilitates the implementation of quality family planning through its Title X Extranet, a valuable platform due to recent shifts toward virtual treatment and communication. The site serves as a clearinghouse for Title X grantees to access program guidelines, training manuals, patient education materials, and other resources. It also ensures successful compliance with Title X program guidelines and delivery of quality services. There are more than 100 files readily available to download at no cost on the Title X network portal.

As the grantee puts it, “Title X in California has worked in tandem with the state’s Family PACT [Planning Access Care Treatment] program to reduce the state’s unintended pregnancy rates to a historic 30-year low. [Having] a robust statewide network supports the delivery of quality family planning services through training, technical assistance, and community outreach and education across California.”

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Special thanks to Amy Moy, chief external affairs officer at Essential Access Health, for her contributions to this story.

ABOUT TITLE X

For 50 years, Title X family planning clinics have played a critical role in ensuring access to a broad range of family planning and related preventive health services for millions of low-income or uninsured individuals and others. Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services.

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