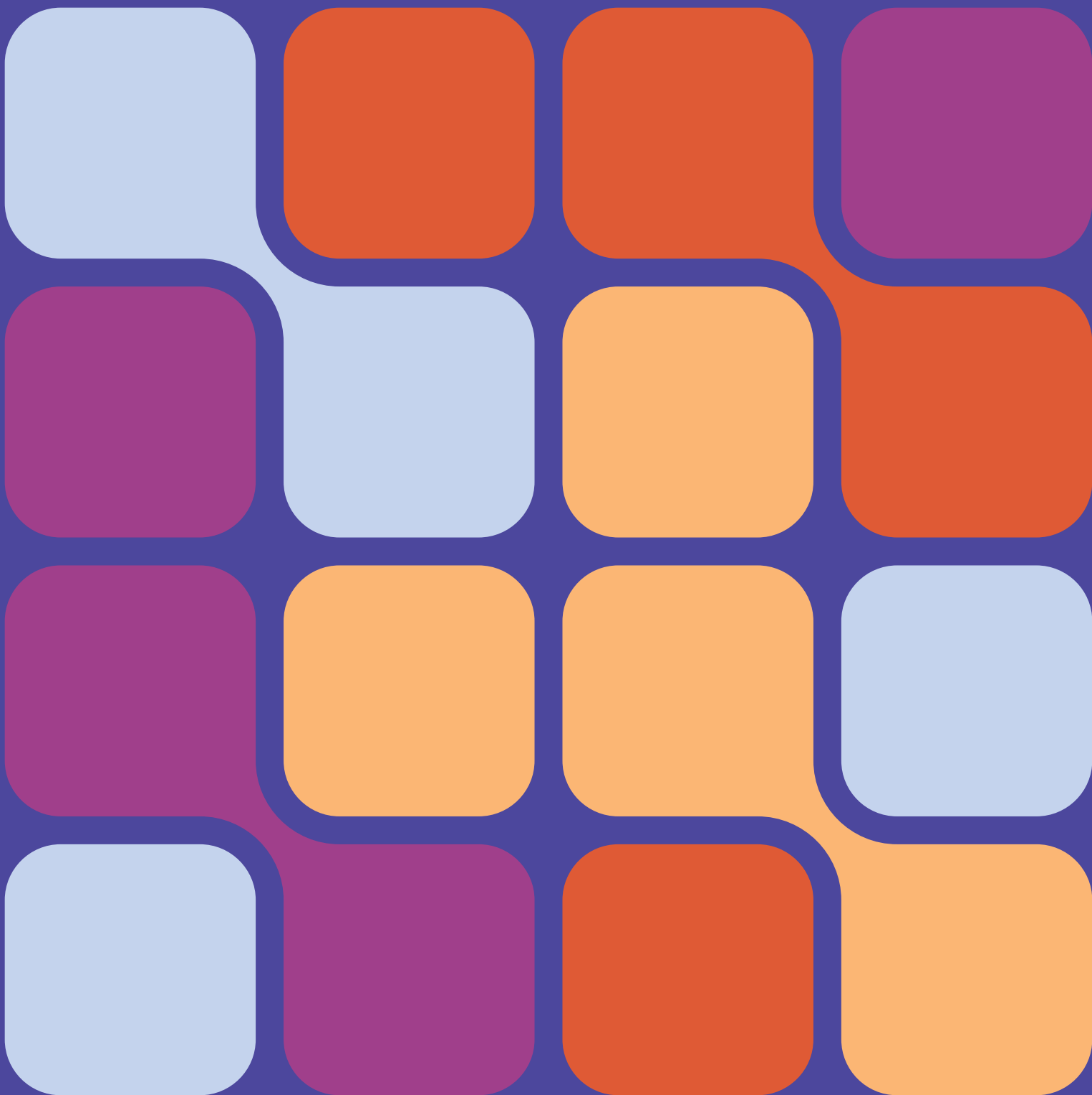




Alameda County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

Implementation Study Report

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Introduction and Key Recommendations

The current federal administration has moved with a speed and scope that has fundamentally destabilized the landscape for immigrant communities across the country. Calls to Alameda County's rapid response hotline have increased by more than 500 percent since the start of 2025. ICE activity in the Bay Area has risen sharply. And simultaneously, federal and state budget decisions are threatening to strip funding from the community organizations that have been the county's frontline response. As one community focus group participant said plainly:

"The county can create programs, but it is community organizations that breathe life into them. Without them, many of these resources simply would not reach those who need them most."

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors has responded with real commitment and urgency – more than \$7.8 million invested in deportation defense, emergency rapid response, emergency legal services, extended support to the Public Defender, and community organizing beginning in early 2025 alone, language access prioritized, and two landmark directives establishing ICE-Free Zones and a countywide Immigration Enforcement Response Plan. These efforts demonstrate that Alameda County has the will to serve its immigrant and refugee residents. Alameda County is now poised to establish the institutional infrastructure to make those commitments add up to something durable across County agencies.

In October 2025, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) took a step towards addressing this key county infrastructure gap by approving a two-year pilot of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA), including budget support for two staff. The recommendation to establish a dedicated Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs was first advanced through the 2021 report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights, commissioned by the late Supervisor Richard Valle and championed by both Supervisor Valle and the late Supervisor Wilma Chan. This study is completed in honor of both Supervisor Valle and Supervisor Chan – not just the groundwork they laid for OIRA's launch, but for their unwavering dedication to all of Alameda County's residents.

Be the Change Consulting, in partnership with LikeWater Consulting and Immigrant Legal Defense, was engaged with funding support from local philanthropic organizations to facilitate a Community Advisory Body (CAB) process. The CAB was charged with developing recommendations for the Board of Supervisors on the OIRA two-year pilot roll out – everything from core functions to structure to key priorities. Over the course of four meetings and asynchronous collaboration between meetings – the 9 person, BOS appointed CAB reviewed information gathered by the consultant team through focus groups, key stakeholder interviews, and a national landscape scan. The CAB developed an emerging picture of Alameda County's strengths and gaps as it strives to be welcoming for immigrants and refugees, and developed recommendations for setting OIRA up for success during the pilot phase and beyond.

The CAB fully supports the BOS moving forward – both because of their own understanding of the need and because there was near unanimous support for OIRA's launch across all stakeholders engaged in the process. What follows is the CAB's best effort to advise the BOS on the most critical immediate actions to take to ensure a successful launch, followed by a description of enabling conditions that must be in place. A more detailed examination of the full set of recommendations is found in the full report.

1

Extend CBO Contracts/Expand Budget for Unaddressed Needs (~\$4.6M/year)

Signal your intention to continue partnering with the community collaboratives for deportation defense, rapid response, emergency legal services, and community organizing by securing ongoing funding for their work. Work closely with contractors to assess their impact to date, as well as support their individual and collective success, while also initiating a needs assessment to determine what gaps remain and move to establish new contracts that fill those gaps. When preparing to renew existing contracts or establish new ones, engage in a transparent process. Collaboration across providers must be explicitly designed for – it cannot be assumed.

2

Establish Office Placement That Enables Real Authority

The most consistent finding from both the national landscape scan and county stakeholder interviews is that where OIRA “sits” will determine its effectiveness. The CAB envisions a two-year incubation within a host department, leading to an independent standalone office. The hosting department must demonstrate: a champion at the agency level; a track record of successful cross-agency collaboration; strong trust with the Board and CAO; genuine community connections; access to operational infrastructure; and a clear commitment to supporting OIRA’s transition to independence at pilot’s end.

3

Launch the Director Search Immediately

The influence of OIRA will depend on the caliber and standing of its leader. Two manager-level positions cannot substitute for a Director with political standing, community relationships, and inter-agency credibility. The Director must be hired before the office is considered operational. Key qualifications: deep Bay Area community rootedness; genuine political acumen; background in immigration legal services, social services, advocacy, or community organizing; and experience managing both public and philanthropic funding.

4

Fund a Full 7-Person Staff Team (~\$1.92M, minus any staff dollars already budgeted for)

No high-functioning immigrant affairs office reviewed in the national scan operates with fewer than five staff. The CAB's recommended seven-person structure – Director, two Deputy Directors, and four specialist positions – is modeled on the leanest effective offices nationally. Offices that attempt to combine policy, contracts management, community engagement, and compliance into a skeleton crew become bottlenecks. OIRA should not launch in a configuration that requires borrowed capacity from other departments to function.

5

Grant OIRA Explicit Cross-Departmental Authority

Without a Board-authorized mandate requiring cooperation from county departments, OIRA risks producing coordination theater rather than coordinated results. The Board should explicitly authorize OIRA to require departmental cooperation on the Language Access Ordinance, the countywide Immigration Enforcement Response Plan, and the ICE-Free Zones policy.

6

Allocate Programmatic Operating Budget (min. \$450K/year)

The Board should formally approve the mission, vision, core functions, and five pilot-phase priorities outlined in this report, and authorize a minimum of \$450,000 annually for programmatic implementation – covering population needs assessment, clearinghouse technology, referral platform development, convenings, and communications. This does not include budget for contracts that may be transferred to OIRA, such as language access services or newcomer website management.

Enabling Conditions and Boundaries for Success

The priorities above are achievable only if certain structural and relational conditions are in place.

The Office Must be Placed For Real Authority & Infrastructure

The single most consistent structural finding across all interviews and the national model review is that where the office “sits” will determine its efficacy. While one central office is the norm, if certain criteria are met, offices can be effective from within an existing agency. Among the top criteria are that the home agency have a track record for collaboration across county agencies and with the community, and that the agency head will both champion the office during the start-up phase, and support its transition to a more permanent home long term. And finally, the BOS must provide a mandate that gives the office teeth; without a cross-departmental mandate, the office will produce coordination theater.

A Director Must Be Hired Before the Office Is Considered Operational

Multiple stakeholders noted that the influence of the office depends on the caliber and standing of its leader. Two manager-level positions cannot substitute for a Director with the political standing, community relationships, and inter-agency credibility to move this work. The staffing sequence matters: hire the Director first, then build the team around a clear mandate.

Contract Action Cannot Wait for the Office to be Fully Stood Up

Single-year funding is important but insufficient to build the community resiliency for fulfilling its individual obligations while also engaging in much needed collaborative spaces. The BOS must signal ongoing support for community collaboration across the existing prioritized areas – emergency response, deportation defense, and community organizing – by allocating budget to this work at least through mid 2028. This guidance is not intended to suggest that the County abandon its due diligence function – it is vital that the County continue to engage with existing contractors to ensure that they are delivering, and that the focus of their work continues to align with community needs. That said, signaling that the County has the intention to sustain its partnership assuming good standing will go a long way toward building durable collaborative infrastructure.

Law Enforcement Engagement Requires an Explicit Community Safety Protocol

The office will need to work with the Public Defender, Sheriff, Probation, and DA – on the countywide response plan, on ICE-Free Zones implementation, and on information-sharing protocols. At the same time, multiple stakeholders are clear that law enforcement presence at OIRA in ways that make community members feel unsafe would undermine the office’s core function. The Director will need an explicit, community-developed protocol for how law enforcement agencies engage with the office – different from how community members engage with it.

The Office Cannot Be the County’s Only Response

OIRA cannot hold the county’s entire accountability to immigrant and refugee communities, or be the sole holder of the values of immigrant inclusion. The office’s role is to coordinate, hold accountable, identify needs, and problem solve so that all County agencies are supported in making the work of welcoming immigrants and refugees in Alameda County everyone’s work – not to be the gap-filler for all Departments and community. A core internal function is working

across county departments to build awareness, provide technical expertise and accountability mechanisms, foster a culture in which every community-facing department understands its role, and create shared priority setting/problem solving infrastructure – but it will not be able to solve problems or advance the shared priorities within any one County agency. For this to work, other county departments must understand that OIRA's priorities are their priorities too, and elected leadership must reinforce that expectation actively, not just at launch.

Community Engagement Must Be Genuine, Not Performative

Multiple stakeholders flagged the concern that this office could become a PR exercise rather than a real accountability structure. Ongoing reporting on activities, proactive partnership – including helping to resource collaboration – and assessment of community relationships is critical.

The CAB offers this short list of immediate actions, supported by a description of related enabling conditions, for immediate BOS review and approval. A more full examination of the priority actions and other recommendations are included in the full report, along with additional background context, a synthesis of stakeholder interview and focus group findings, and a national landscape scan summary.

“Personal guidance, trust, and access to information can empower individuals to move from merely surviving to leading.”

Alameda County has the political will, the community infrastructure, and the cultural history to become a place where all people can be seen and served. What it needs now is the structure to make good on that promise. This report is a roadmap for doing exactly that.

About This Study: Background Context & Methodology

Alameda County is home to more than 540,000 immigrants and refugees – nearly one in three residents. They are neighbors, workers, parents, small business owners, and community anchors who contribute to every dimension of county life. For decades, the County has recognized that its ability to serve all residents equitably depends on how well it supports those who face the greatest barriers: language, legal status, and fear. Layered on top of these barriers is a fragmented landscape of services that can be nearly impossible to navigate alone.

In December 2016, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors took a meaningful step to address fragmentation by establishing the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights, led by Supervisors Richard Valle and Wilma Chan, and Scott Haggarty. Over the course of nearly eighteen months, the Committee convened public forums across all five districts, bringing together county agencies, community-based organizations, and immigrant and refugee residents to surface concerns, document gaps, and assess the County's capacity to protect and serve its most vulnerable populations during a period of intensified federal immigration enforcement.

The process was rigorous and far-reaching. It examined ten county agencies and engaged more than twenty community organizations. In December 2021, the Committee's findings were published in *The State of Immigrant and Refugee Rights in Alameda County* – a comprehensive report authored by Dr. Peter Mancina of the University of Oxford and commissioned by Supervisor Richard Valle. The report documented and commended the County's significant efforts to serve immigrants and refugees. It also found persistent but approachable gaps: inconsistent sanctuary protections, under-resourced legal defense, fragmented service coordination, and an absence of any central county entity responsible for immigrant and refugee affairs.

The report lifted up a number of important recommendations for specific County agencies, along with overarching recommendations for Board of Supervisors and County Administrator consideration. Among its ten recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, the report called explicitly for the creation of a dedicated Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs – a centralized county agency charged with coordination, advocacy, policy support, and community organizing. The recommendation envisioned an office that would serve as a hub connecting county departments, community-based organizations, and the residents they serve.

While many of the recommendations highlighted in the report were advanced (See progress update in [Appendix 1](#), the momentum behind the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs was interrupted by the tragic passing of Supervisor Richard Valle, whose vision and leadership had driven the Ad Hoc Committee's work. In his absence, and amid the competing demands of a post-pandemic recovery period, the recommendation did not advance as intended.

The urgency, however, did not diminish – and neither did the County's commitment. Following the November 2024 presidential election, the Public Protection Committee Chair Supervisor Elisa Márquez convened a hearing in December 2024 to receive an update from the Immigration Representation Unit of the Alameda County Public Defender's Office, recognizing

the immediate need to readdress the County's efforts to safeguard immigrant and refugee rights in light of a new federal administration's stated priorities. In early 2025, the Board of Supervisors established Alameda County Together for All – known as ACT for All – an Ad Hoc Committee modeled after the 2017 effort by late Supervisors Chan and Valle, created as a vehicle to coordinate a proactive response to protect, support, and lift up communities impacted by federal policies and budgets.

Chaired by Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas and Vice-Chaired by Supervisor Elisa Márquez, the ACT for All Committee moved quickly and decisively. The ACT for All Committee has put forward a number of critical recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for action. At the March 11, 2025 Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting, the Board approved the final \$2.2 million of a \$3.5 million commitment to fund critical community-based services to protect Alameda County immigrant and refugee communities, not including investments in the Public Defenders office. That investment expanded the County's rapid response services, bolstered legal defense capacity, and accelerated community organizing and coalition building efforts. In August 2025, ACT for All made the recommendation to move forward with the launch of the Alameda County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs. By October 2025, the BOS allocated an additional \$3.57 million in funding to expand critical deportation defense, hotline, and community organizing, as well as to move forward the recommendation from the 2021 report to launch an Alameda County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs. To signal its commitment, the BOS approved \$450k for two staff positions within the Social Services Agency to advance OIRA into its pilot phase.

Alameda County is not waiting for OIRA to be off the ground in order to defend its immigrant and refugee residents. In December 2025, the BOS affirmed its commitment to language access. At the January 27, 2026 Board meeting, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed additional policies to protect community safety during this time:

- **Countywide Immigration Enforcement Response Plan** directs the County Administrator to create a coordinated plan that details rapid-response protocols among County agencies, community partners, and government entities to protect individual rights, ensure access to services, and promote public safety.
- **County Policy Establishing "ICE-Free Zones"** prohibits the use of County-owned or County-controlled properties, including parking lots, vacant lots, garages, or nonpublic areas of buildings for staging areas, processing locations, or operations bases for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement, and mandates clear signage, physical barriers where appropriate, and consistent procedures for implementation and enforcement.

As demonstrated, Alameda County has the political will to protect and uplift immigrants and refugees. However, what has been missing is the institutional infrastructure to coordinate the County's response: to ensure that the resources, relationships, and commitments already present in Alameda County work together on behalf of the people who need them most. It is in this context – one of both renewed urgency and deliberate recommitment – that the BOS commissioned the OIRA two-year pilot implementation study.

*In memory of
Supervisor Richard Valle,
visionary and leader
for immigrant and refugee
rights in Alameda County.*



*In memory of
Supervisor Wilma Chan,
advocate for immigrant
and refugee rights.*

About the Preparers of the Report

Be the Change Consulting, in partnership with Likewater Consulting and Immigrant Legal Defense, was engaged by the OIRA Steering Committee through the Request for Proposals (RFP) process to lead a landscape analysis, facilitate stakeholder dialogue, and develop recommendations to guide the Board and County leadership as they design the Alameda County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA). The OIRA Steering Committee is comprised of members of philanthropy, core county staff, Supervisor Márquez, District 2 Chief of Staff Alex Boskovich, and the consulting team (see [Appendix 2](#) for complete roster) and served the purpose of managing Be The Change's engagement, including process design approval. The study and associated Community Advisory Body process was supported by the Zellerbach Family Foundation, Akonadi Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation.

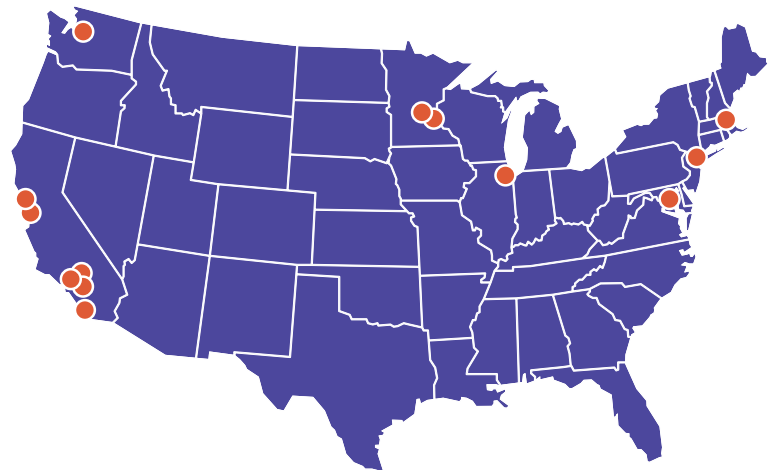
Methodology

The study drew on five bodies of work: a comparative analysis of peer jurisdictions; a comprehensive county stakeholder interview process; a community focus group convened through nominations from all five Board districts; a Steering Committee comprised of electeds, county staff, and philanthropy who helped steer the effort; and a nine-member Community Advisory Body (CAB) that reviewed findings and developed the recommendations in this report.

Comparative Analysis of Peer Jurisdictions

The comparative analysis consisted of interviews and background research with the following 13 jurisdictions and entities (see [Appendix 3](#) for the list of interview participants).

- Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- San Diego County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Chicago Mayor's Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights
- San Francisco County Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs
- Santa Clara County Office of Immigrant Relations
- NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Welcome Saint Paul – Immigrant & Refugee Program
- Minneapolis Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Orange County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Los Angeles County Office of Immigrant Affairs
- Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement
- Baltimore County Immigrant Affairs Department



County Stakeholder Interview Process

Twenty-two county stakeholder interviews were conducted between March and April with the following: Community Advisory Body members, Board of Supervisor Offices, Social Services Agency, Assessor's Office, County Administrator's Office, Alameda County Health, Community Development Agency, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, Alameda County Probation Office, Office of the Alameda County District Attorney, Alameda County Public Defender's Office – Immigration Unit, Alameda County General Services Agency, County Counsel.

Community Focus Group

One community focus group composed of 12 individuals nominated from all five Board districts was held in March 2026. The focus group invited participants to share community success stories, reflect on the county's effectiveness in supporting immigrants and refugees, and the early indicators for the office's success. For more details see [Appendix 4: Focus Group Process & Findings](#).

Steering Committee

The steering committee consists of philanthropic partners Zellerbach Family Foundation, Akonadi Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation, Social Services Agency, County Administrator's Office, and District 2. Their role included implementation study planning process design, funding, implementation guidance, and troubleshooting barriers to completion. The steering committee developed the scope of work, selected the consultant team for the implementation study, approved the advisory committee, and informed process design.

Core Implementation Partners

Core implementation partners which include Social Services Agency, District 2, District 4, and key funders were engaged at the beginning of the process in a discovery capacity. This group offered background on the work to date, key priorities, and important nuances shaping the research.

These same partners were re-engaged toward the end of the process to review emerging recommendations and offer additional context and feasibility considerations, which were then brought back to the CAB.

Community Advisory Body

In January 2026, Supervisor Márquez invited each Board member to nominate community members to serve on the CAB. Nine members were selected to reflect diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic, and geographic backgrounds:

- One representative from each of the five supervisorial districts
- One representative each from Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership (ACILEP), Alameda County Collaborative for Removal Defense (ACCoRD) and Alameda County United In Defense of Immigrant Rights (ACUDIR), as well as API Legal Outreach (APILO)

Members brought lived experience, direct service expertise, and deep systems knowledge to the process (see [Appendix 5](#) for complete roster).

Over four facilitated sessions between February and April and ongoing offline review of

research findings including the comparative models scan, county stakeholder interviews, and landscape analysis, the CAB analyzed Alameda County's current state and developed every recommendation in this report.

The four facilitated session topics included:

- 1 Landscape & Context:** Reviewed peer jurisdiction scan and county stakeholder interview findings; established shared understanding of current state.
- 2 Strengths & Gaps:** Analyzed Alameda County's existing assets and opportunity gaps; surfaced design principles to guide recommendations.
- 3 Design Decisions:** Deliberated on office placement, staffing model, core functions, and community accountability structure.
- 4 Budget & Work Plan:** Finalized budget recommendations, 2-year pilot priorities, and enabling conditions for launch.

Process Reflections from Consulting Team

After hearing concerns about the truncated nature of this process from several CAB members, the consulting team offers the following reflections:

CAB member selection was shaped by the BOS's urgent response to the threat of mass deportations. In March 2025, three collaboratives – ACILEP, ACUDIR, and ACCoRD – were quickly contracted to establish a hotline, expand deportation defense, and mobilize community action. This was a bold and appreciated step. At the same time, these groups need sufficient support to meet growing demand, and the County should consider adding additional collaboratives to address remaining gaps. That forward-looking planning has not yet occurred is understandable – this is precisely the role OIRA is being set up to lead.

When the CAB launched in February 2026, these three contractors were automatically included. While their leadership is critical, it reflected a limited range of perspectives. The compressed two-month timeline further constrained the process, leaving little opportunity for CAB members to consult their broader networks or vet recommendations with those not engaged. As a result, members are put in the difficult position of representing communities without sufficient time for inclusive, authentic engagement, including those not included but essential to build a truly Welcoming County.

In short, the process has limitations. This underscores the need to deepen and expand OIRA's relationships with the full ecosystem of community-based organizations and to continue engaging a more representative CAB during the pilot phase. With that understanding – and with a commitment to broader, ongoing community partnership – the CAB can move forward with these recommendations.

Synthesis of Findings from Alameda County Stakeholder Engagement

The stakeholder interviews, focus group findings, document review, and landscape analysis surfaced more strengths than this report can fully capture. Alameda County has genuine assets – political, institutional, relational, and community-based – that many counties working to establish offices like this simply do not have. This includes tremendous progress on the key recommendations highlighted in the 2021 *Final Report of the Alameda County Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights* ([Appendix 1](#)). What follows highlights some of the most significant. The honest framing is not “how do we fix Alameda County” but rather: what would it look like to connect what already exists, resource it adequately, and hold it accountable to the communities it serves? This is the work OIRA is positioned to do.

Strengths OIRA Can Build From

Across every area of inquiry, the data reveals meaningful infrastructure already in place: political will, service capacity, community networks, and policy frameworks. The challenge is not absence but fragmentation. These pieces are not yet fully connected to each other or accountable to the communities they serve but meaningful infrastructure and long-term relationships are ripe to be leveraged.

Rare and genuine political will at multiple levels simultaneously.

The Board has passed two landmark ordinances: a policy establishing ICE-Free Zones on county-owned and county-controlled properties, and a directive to the County Administrator to create a countywide Immigration Enforcement Response Plan with rapid-response protocols, staff training, and public communication strategies. Supervisors’ offices are directly engaged in the OIRA launch process and to affirm Alameda County’s commitment to equitable language access for all. Alameda County is in the unique position of not debating whether to act, we are a county figuring out how.

Deportation defense and community organizing infrastructure is strong and growing.

The deportation defense and community organizing infrastructure expanded in 2016 did not disappear after 2021. The Public Defender’s immigration unit provides representation across the full spectrum of immigration proceedings. Investments in ACCoRD, ACILEP, and ACUDIR are expanding removal defense capacity and growing the ability of organizations to collaborate on both the immediate crisis and longer-term systemic change. Demand continues to significantly exceed capacity, but these investments represent a serious and growing foundation.

The County is investing in immigrant services.

A meaningful scale of immigrant-serving programs is operational. SSA administers numerous programs and has experience deploying innovative emergency response models, such as standing up food distribution pop-ups when CalFresh benefits were disrupted. In addition to overseeing the core health services, AC Health, through the Public Health Department, stood up a Community Navigators program to support more real-time information exchange and

problem solving with community members. The Community Development Agency connects residents in unincorporated communities to housing support and basic needs through CBO partnerships. The groundwork for a coordinated system of support for immigrants and refugees already exists in Alameda County in meaningful ways.

Mutual aid and community-based rapid response infrastructure is already operating.

Multiple coalitions are coordinating on emergency response and scenario planning. Mutual aid networks and volunteer foot patrols are actively filling service gaps. Neighborhood food pantries are ensuring neighbors don't go hungry. The county funds services like the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) to ensure community receives the food resources it needs. Over the last 10 years the ACCFB has received \$72M from county contracts. Additionally, the county has provided nearly \$94M for FY25-FY28 for all food related contracts.

"In times of crisis, the county and its CBOs have been the first to respond – distributing food, providing emotional support, and connecting families with vital resources."

-Focus Group Participant

Law enforcement policies are stronger than most community members know.

Both the Sheriff and DA have adopted meaningful protective policies and practices. The Sheriff does not honor ICE civil detainers, provides materials in multiple languages, and actively partners with community organizations to educate residents about the difference between local and federal law enforcement. The DA has written policies prohibiting staff from sharing immigration status or engaging with ICE. Probation has a standing policy not to inquire about immigration status and has embedded CBO partners in formal structures including the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council and Community Corrections Partnership.

Language access infrastructure exists and is ready to be leveraged.

A commitment to equitable language access for all residents regardless of immigration status or language spoken was affirmed by the Board in 2025. The CAO oversees general-fund-supported language access contracts. Each county department is expected to have a designated language access coordinator. The Sheriff provides translation services in 12-17 languages across patrol and jail operations. SSA has a robust written language access policy. The infrastructure exists – what is needed now is consistent implementation and accountability. OIRA can be positioned to provide both.

A rich and capable CBO ecosystem, ready for deeper partnership.

Alameda County has an experienced network of community organizations doing the work of navigation, service delivery, legal defense and education, rapid response, community organizing, and trust-building that no county office can replicate. OIRA would be entering a space where community organizations have been doing convening work for years. This means relationship clarity and genuine partnership – not top down county-led coordination – will matter from the start. Several specific assets to leverage include ACUDIR, who is emerging as a potential convening structure for CBOs worth investing in directly; the County's existing contractor network is an underleveraged infrastructure for cross-provider learning; and in some parts of the county, robust local convening structures already exist.

Gaps OIRA Is Positioned to Close

Two existential crises on different timelines.

The first is immediate: unchecked federal immigration enforcement, disappearances, and pervasive community fear. The second is looming: significant funding losses driven by federal HR1 decisions and the state-level shift from Mental Health Services Act to Behavioral Health Services Act, which will strip funding from CBOs that have provided in-language mental health and other services – a cliff arriving July 1. The office needs to be designed to operate on both timelines at once, including acting on contract extensions and advising on budget decisions before it is even fully stood up.

Stabilizing and resourcing the CBO infrastructure.

The county does not deliver most services directly – CBOs do. And they are facing a funding cliff, capacity constraints, and geographic concentration that does not match where needs are growing. Rapid response coordination is currently resting on short-term contracts and volunteer capacity. Any county strategy that does not act to stabilize and expand CBO infrastructure is building on sand. The office cannot wait until it is fully operational to engage this.

Translating political will and policies into implemented reality.

The January 27 directive from District 5 to create a response plan led to – ICE-Free Zones. These Board directives will need cross-agency coordination to be further implemented. The same is true for language access implementation. In-language complaint forms are not consistently accessible. Monitoring within each agency has not always confirmed whether non-English and non-Spanish speakers are actually being reached by county services, and there is limited accountability outside of the county itself. OIRA can drive the accountability layer that converts good policy into consistent community experience – including proactive compliance monitoring of the kind that has driven measurable improvement in peer jurisdictions.

Strengthening the resource and referral navigation system.

From Supervisor offices to CBOs to community members, stakeholders describe the same experience: the absence of coherent referral and navigation infrastructure strains providers and prevents immigrants and refugees from accessing resources that already exist. A focus group participant said: “I continue to refer people to a hotline that I know won’t be manned, because I don’t have another resource.” This is the most universal finding in the data – and among the most actionable near-term opportunities. The office can consider a tech platform to establish a more responsive system to capture needs and make connections, that doesn’t overwhelm any one agency or require around the clock labor.

Threading the law enforcement partnership carefully and explicitly.

The Sheriff and DA are doing more than many community members know – and communicating that clearly is an opportunity. But live, unresolved issues remain: ICE arrests are reportedly occurring in parking lots outside county facilities following public release notifications; community members perceive the County as overly reliant on deportation-triggering charges; and community groups have explicitly noted that law enforcement presence at or within OIRA could make the office feel unsafe.

Building a shared picture of who the County is serving and what they need.

There is currently no systematic way to understand which populations are coming in, what they are asking for, what they are being turned away from, or where benefits are being denied. There is also no agreed-upon set of indicators for assessing need across county agencies and community partners, contributing to perceptions of some populations or geographies being over- or under-served without agreed upon evidence to back the claim. This is not a failure of community-based or elected advocates – it is the absence of clear and consistent data to inform program and service decisions. Establishing shared indicators, in partnership with community organizations and service providers, is both a trust-building step and a foundation for everything else OIRA will do.

This is the context in which an Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs must be built – an asset rich but unstable and fractured environment in need of infrastructure to respond to immediate escalating crises and the institutional staying power to advance long-term integration and equity goals even when the federal context shifts and the immediate threats dissipate.

National Landscape Scan

As Alameda County considers how to structure a dedicated Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs so that it builds on strengths and addresses current needs, it does so with the benefit of being able to learn from peers. Across California and beyond, counties and cities have developed a range of models for coordinating immigrant and refugee services – each reflecting different theories of change, different political contexts, and different resource environments. No single model is universally transferable, but together they offer a useful map of the design decisions Alameda County must make.

To inform Alameda County's design decisions, this report examined 11 peer jurisdictions, listed in the methodology section above. Each has developed a distinct model for coordinating immigrant and refugee affairs, reflecting different theories of change, government structures, and resource environments. Detailed profiles of each jurisdiction – including staffing, budget, funding sources, service delivery approach, and community accountability mechanisms – are included in [Appendix 6: Comparative Overview of 11 Peer Jurisdiction Models](#). What follows is a synthesis of the key patterns and design lessons that emerged from that analysis.

One finding cuts across every jurisdiction reviewed and deserves to be stated plainly at the outset: every office in this analysis was created because a small group of community members and advocates insisted that it had to exist. None emerged from a top-down government initiative. Funding has shaped how each office has evolved over time, but the animating force in every case was community will – people who refused to accept a county without coordinated infrastructure for immigrant and refugee services. Alameda County is no different, and this report is itself a product of that same insistence.

This research reveals meaningfully different approaches to the same core challenge: ***how does a government entity coordinate and amplify support for immigrant and refugee communities without displacing the community-based organizations that are often best positioned to deliver it?*** Our study suggested that Alameda County needs to answer the following design questions to establish a local model.

Table 1: Key Design Dimensions and What Peer Models Reveal

Design Question	What the Evidence Shows
Where should the office sit in government?	The office is best positioned with executive-level authority (e.g., County Executive or Mayor's Office) to maximize cross-department influence, policy alignment, and visibility, while maintaining formal linkages into service agencies to ensure access to benefits systems. Placement in either location alone creates tradeoffs; the strongest models combine both reach and embedded access.
What is the best role for the office to play in terms of providing warm referrals?	The office should act as a coordinator of a referral and centralized information ecosystem – not a direct service provider. The most effective models build and manage networks of CBOs and legal providers, often with funding attached, rather than handling intake and casework internally. This preserves capacity while ensuring residents are connected to trusted, specialized providers.
What is the office's relationship to deportation defense?	A formal, resourced connection to deportation defense is essential. The strongest offices either administer legal service contracts directly or coordinate closely with publicly funded legal defense systems. Deportation defense functions as the backbone of the ecosystem, anchoring referral systems and driving demand across all models.
How should the office be funded?	The most effective funding structures use County General Fund dollars as a stable base, supplemented by targeted state funds and philanthropic partnerships. Layered funding increases flexibility and resilience, while over-reliance on restricted or external funds can limit who can be served and create instability.
How does the office stay accountable to the community?	Most existing models rely on informal mechanisms (e.g., convenings, partnerships, listening sessions), but these are not sufficient for deep accountability. Stronger approaches require formalized structures for community input and shared decision-making, particularly with funded CBO partners and directly impacted communities.
How should the office navigate political context?	The office should build broad, durable political support across administrations by framing its work in multiple ways: equity, public health, economic stability, and community safety anchored in legislation and codified mandates. Offices that rely on a single champion or narrative are more vulnerable, while those that institutionalize their role and diversify their messaging are more resilient.

What This Means for Alameda County

Alameda County enters this design process with structural advantages that most peer jurisdictions did not have at the outset: an organized and experienced community partner ecosystem, a nationally recognized Public Defender's Immigration Representation Unit, county-funded rapid response infrastructure through ACILEP, and a Board of Supervisors that has demonstrated sustained political will. It also enters in a moment of acute and escalating need.

The comparative analysis points toward a hybrid model – one with enough placement authority to drive cross-departmental coordination, enough connection to service systems to serve as a hub for service information and referral navigation, a clear and well-resourced relationship with immigration legal defense infrastructure, a physical presence strategy that prioritizes community trust over institutional convenience, and a genuine community accountability mechanism built in from the start. The specific model options, staffing configurations, and funding recommendations that follow are grounded in this analysis, Alameda County's existing infrastructure, and the priorities that emerged through stakeholder engagement.

Across every jurisdiction reviewed, the offices that have proven most durable are those that secured a stable General Fund baseline – not as a ceiling, but as a floor that insulates core operations from the volatility of restricted grants, philanthropic cycles, and changing political winds. Alameda County's design should prioritize that stability from the outset.

Recommendations for OIRA's Pilot Phase: Launching an Office that Lasts

The recommendations that follow build on the research, stakeholder input, and methodology described earlier in this report, and reflect a deliberate effort to translate those findings into actionable guidance for Alameda County. As described above, a Community Advisory Body (CAB) was convened to engage deeply with the evidence base including the comparative model scan, county stakeholder interviews, and broader landscape analysis and to help shape a vision for both the strategy and impact of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA).

Through a series of facilitated sessions and ongoing review, the CAB worked to develop recommendations across each dimension of the office's design. These recommendations are informed by community expertise, direct service experience, and systems-level understanding. They are intended to reflect both what is needed on the ground and what has been shown to work in peer jurisdictions.

Where possible, the CAB aimed to put forward recommendations that are concrete and ready for implementation by the Board of Supervisors and County staff. At the same time, we recognize that the internal structures, constraints, and operational realities of County government are complex and not always fully visible from the outside. As such, this section offers both strategic insights and specific recommendations. While many of the recommendations are designed to be actionable, they should be interpreted with flexibility and adapted as needed to align with County processes, legal requirements, and implementation feasibility.

Mission & Vision: Why This Office Exists & What It Stands For

Learning from What Exists

To ground the conversation about what this office should be and do, the Community Advisory Body began by reviewing how similar offices in other jurisdictions describe themselves – alongside the vision language from the ACT for All Committee and the recommendations from Alameda County's own 2021 report.

CAB Insights: Mission and Vision Design Principles

The following principles, developed by the CAB, should guide how the mission and vision statements are drafted, adopted, and revised over time.

- **Define “safety” specifically, or don’t use it.** The word means different things to different communities. The office should only use language it can actually stand behind and deliver on.



- **Aspirational vision is fine; the mission statement needs to be concrete.** Words like belonging, equity, and inclusion are appropriate for a vision. The mission statement should specify what the office will actually do and finish that sentence with something achievable.
- **Be honest about scope at this stage.** Name what the office is building toward while setting realistic expectations for what is achievable now.
- **Build in a clear policy mandate.** The office needs an explicit role in driving policy – not just coordinating programs. Without it, the office lacks leverage.
- **Make data a core function, not an afterthought.** Connect to existing data infrastructure – including AC Health’s CAPE unit and university partnerships – rather than building from scratch.
- **Orient toward durable infrastructure, not just emergency response.** The office’s long-term value is in coordinating systems, assessing and filling gaps, and sustaining the organizations already doing this work.

This exercise revealed a core tension that shaped the CAB’s thinking throughout the process: the community and the County’s own history are calling for something substantive – an office with policy reach, coordination authority, community accountability, and a role in how the County allocates resources. The question the CAB kept returning to was not whether that vision was worth pursuing, but how honest to be about what is achievable. The recommendations below reflect that tension directly: naming the full vision while being clear about what the pilot phase can and cannot accomplish.

CAB Recommendation: Vision and Mission

VISION: A county where strong public infrastructure, partnerships, and data-informed policies, programs and strategies ensure immigrant and refugee communities are supported, protected from harm, and able to fully participate in the social, civic, and economic life of the region.

MISSION: To build and sustain the infrastructure that supports immigrant communities by convening partners, coordinating programs and services, analyzing data to identify gaps, and advancing policies and investments that strengthen outcomes for immigrant and refugee residents.

Core Functions: What This Office Will Do

Learning from What Exists

With the Mission and Vision established, the CAB turned to defining the core functions of OIRA by grounding its thinking in both national models and the specific context of Alameda County. The comparative scan of peer jurisdictions makes clear that there is no single standard model for immigrant affairs offices. However, several core functions consistently appear across the strongest and most established offices.

Across jurisdictions, offices most commonly:

- Administer and coordinate deportation defense funding and infrastructure
- Lead and coordinate language access efforts across departments
- Advance policy development and implementation related to immigrant inclusion
- Serve as a referral and navigation hub, often in partnership with contracted CBOs

- Support cross-agency technical assistance, coordination and compliance with countywide policies to ensure welcoming/inclusive practices,
- Develop and operate immigrant inclusion programming directly

At the same time, these functions are configured differently depending on placement, staffing, and local context. Some offices emphasize direct service and benefits navigation (e.g., San Diego, Orange County), while others focus on system-level coordination, contracting, and policy influence (e.g., LA County, San Francisco, New York City).

This variation reinforced a key takeaway for the CAB: OIRA's core functions cannot simply replicate another jurisdiction's model, but must be tailored to Alameda County's systems, gaps, and opportunities.

CAB Insights on Core Functions

Building on the research and their lived experience navigating Alameda County systems, CAB members identified several guiding principles for defining OIRA's core functions:

- **Balance direct impact with system-level change.** The office must meet urgent community needs while also shifting how County systems function over time.
- **Center community partnership as core infrastructure – not an add-on.** CBOs are not just service providers, but essential partners in design, implementation, and accountability.
- **Anchor the work in affirmative legal services, defense and navigation.** Legal support and system navigation are the most consistent and urgent needs across communities and should ground the office's role.
- **Design for coordination, not duplication.** OIRA should fill gaps, strengthen and connect systems, rather than replicate services already provided elsewhere in the County.
- **Build for long-term durability.** Core functions should remain stable across political shifts, even as specific programs evolve.
- **Prioritize accessibility and trust.** Functions should be designed in ways that reduce barriers to access, particularly for undocumented and marginalized residents.

Together, these insights shaped a vision of OIRA as a backbone entity that strengthens the broader ecosystem of services, policy, and community engagement.

CAB Recommendation for OIRA's Core Functions

The functions below represent OIRA's permanent, standing responsibilities the – work the office holds in perpetuity, regardless of political context or phase of implementation. They describe what a fully realized OIRA should be, and what all decisions related to staffing, budget, and placement should build toward.

We recognize that OIRA is unlikely to have sufficient capacity to fully operationalize all functions at launch. The implementation roadmap that follows outlines how these functions can be phased in over time, beginning with foundational elements that enable more complex work in later stages.

OIRA's Core Functions



Community Partnership & Engagement

- Convening community-led efforts
- Elevating voice in policy & budget
- Managing CBO contracts for rapid response, legal services & engagement



Population Needs Assessment Planning & Evaluation

- Ongoing assessment of needs, service utilization & gaps
- Shared indicators with community partners & County departments
- Ecosystem mapping



Clearinghouse & Navigation Hub

- Maintaining a multilingual hub for service referrals and county system navigation to connect residents with what they need



Public-Private Partnership Development

- Cultivating private resources to complement public funding
- Blending streams to support innovation, collaboration & community power



County Coordination, Compliance & Capacity Building

- Coordinating cross-departmental policy implementation and compliance
- Technical assistance and training
- Language access and other rights (such as labor) complaint and response tracking



Policy Development & Advocacy

- Monitoring & shaping policy at local, state & federal levels
- Advancing immigrant-inclusive policy from within County government



Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

- Public-facing communications to share information & shape narrative
- Coordinating with peer offices to align strategies & leverage opportunities



Learning & Innovation

- Ongoing cross-jurisdictional learning
- Identifying & sharing best practices
- Building the County's capacity to adapt to changing conditions & emerging needs

These functions represent OIRA's permanent, standing responsibilities – independent of political context or phase of implementation.

Community Partnership & Engagement

Convening and proactively engaging in community-led efforts; elevating community voice in policy and budget decisions; ensuring accountability to immigrant and refugee communities. Includes managing contracts with CBOs for rapid response, immigration legal services, and community engagement.

Population Needs Assessment, Planning & Evaluation

Conducting ongoing assessment of community needs, service utilization, and gaps; developing shared indicators with community partners and County departments; mapping and evaluating the broader service ecosystem, including evaluating county services and contractors.

Clearinghouse & Navigation Hub

Maintaining a multilingual, accessible system for referrals and navigation across County and community-based services; ensuring residents can connect to appropriate resources through trusted pathways.

Public-Private Partnership Development

Cultivating and coordinating private resources to complement public funding; establishing mechanisms to blend funding streams and support innovation, collaboration, and community power-building.

County Coordination, Compliance & Capacity Building

Coordinating cross-departmental policy implementation; providing technical assistance and training to County agencies; supporting compliance with language access and immigrant inclusion policies, including tracking and responding to complaints.

Policy Development & Advocacy

Monitoring and shaping policy at local, state, and federal levels; advancing immigrant-inclusive policies within County government; ensuring OIRA informs decision-making from within.

Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

Leading public-facing communications to share information, shape narrative, and increase awareness of available resources; coordinating with other jurisdictions and peer offices to align strategies and leverage opportunities.

Learning & Innovation

Engaging in ongoing learning across jurisdictions; identifying and sharing best practices; building the County's capacity to adapt to changing conditions and emerging needs.

Office Placement: Where the Office Sits

Learning from What Exists

The question of where to place OIRA is one of the most consequential design decisions the County must make. There is no single correct answer; each option carries meaningful tradeoffs in authority, access, infrastructure, and execution capacity.

Placement fundamentally shapes what an office can do. Offices embedded within a single department benefit from existing infrastructure and proximity to services, but often struggle to

exercise authority beyond that department. Offices with executive-level positioning are better positioned to coordinate across agencies and drive system-wide change, but may lack direct access to service systems.

Within Alameda County, four options emerged through interviews and CAB discussion:

- ❑ **Social Services Agency (SSA):** While SSA offers strong alignment with service delivery systems, County staff raised concerns about the track record of leading cross agency efforts and departmental bandwidth as social safety net eligibility criteria rapidly shifted.
- ❑ **County Administrator's Office (CAO):** Placement here aligns with the need for centralized authority, but the CAO currently lacks the programmatic infrastructure needed to house and operationalize a new office of this kind.
- ❑ **Assessor's Office:** Identified as a potential sponsor with strong leadership interest and enthusiasm, which research suggests can be a critical factor in successfully launching new initiatives.
- ❑ **AC Health:** Has a track record of anchoring cross agency efforts, including managing the Newcomer Website, facing bandwidth issues as the need for indigent care rises.

These options illustrate that no single placement fully satisfies all design criteria, reinforcing the need to approach this decision with clarity about priorities and tradeoffs.

CAB Insights on Office Placement

Through this analysis, the CAB identified several key principles to guide placement decisions:

- ❑ **There is no perfect placement – only informed tradeoffs.** The goal is not to find an ideal home, but to select a structure that best enables the office's core functions while mitigating known risks.
- ❑ **Authority matters more than location alone.** Without sufficient authority and visibility, the office risks becoming advisory rather than operational, regardless of where it sits.
- ❑ **Infrastructure is essential for execution.** Placement within an office that lacks contracting, staffing, and program management capacity will significantly slow implementation.
- ❑ **Leadership commitment is a critical success factor.** The willingness and enthusiasm of the sponsoring department or office can materially impact whether a pilot initiative gains traction.
- ❑ **Accountability must be designed, not assumed.** Especially if placed within a large or service-heavy department, clear mechanisms are needed to ensure the office's priorities remain visible and advanced.
- ❑ **Placement should enable evolution to a stand-alone department.** The initial placement does not need to be permanent, but it should create the conditions for learning, growth, and eventual right-sizing of the office.

CAB Recommendations on Office Placement

The CAB envisions this office as an independent entity within the County, with a 2-year incubation period within the CAO. Through conversations with the steering committee and county staff the technical constraints and context of Alameda County came to light, illuminating that the CAB won't have the level of intra-county administrative and operational insight to make actionable recommendations. So we offer the following criteria in determining how to position this office for success in a 2-year incubation period, leading to independence.

- ❑ **A champion at the agency level:** new efforts don't get off the ground unless the head of the department is a proactive champion
- ❑ **County collaboration track record:** The agency must have a track record of successfully convening interdepartmental efforts
- ❑ **Strong reputation:** The agency must be trusted by the BOS to play this critical leadership role
- ❑ **Incubation that supports transition:** The agency must balance its enthusiasm and capacity for incubating OIRA with supporting its evolution to a new structure at the end of the pilot phase
- ❑ **Community Connections:** The agency must have trusting, bi-directional partnerships with community organizations and have a track record of partnering on analogous systems change efforts
- ❑ **Access to operational infrastructure:** The office should be able to leverage existing systems for contracting, communications, and program management, particularly during the pilot phase, where easy on-ramping will be essential.
- ❑ **Formal accountability mechanisms:** Regular reporting (e.g., quarterly updates to the Board or ACT Committee) should be built in to ensure transparency and sustained momentum.
- ❑ **Defined pilot structure:** Placement should be understood as part of a time-limited pilot, with a formal evaluation to determine long-term structure.

Office Staffing: Roles and Authority

Learning from What Exists

Across the jurisdictions reviewed, no high-functioning immigrant affairs office operates with fewer than five staff – and the most effective offices are significantly larger. New York City's MOIA runs 50-60 staff across dedicated teams for policy, language access compliance, grantmaking, outreach, and communications. San Francisco fields 35 staff with specialists embedded in each functional area, including a dedicated language access team and a policy partnership with the Immigrant Rights Commission. Even mid-sized offices like Santa Clara County and Chicago maintain distinct roles for program management, policy, community outreach, and analyst functions – recognizing that these responsibilities cannot be meaningfully collapsed into one or two generalist positions.

The pattern is consistent: offices that attempt to combine policy, contracting, community engagement, and compliance into a skeleton crew become bottlenecks. They are reactive rather than proactive, unable to manage contracts rigorously, maintain community relationships, and advance policy simultaneously. Several offices in the scan including those that began with minimal staffing explicitly noted that understaffing in the early phase created structural debt that took years to recover from.

Staffing models across comparable jurisdictions also reveal a clear functional logic. The most effective offices organize staff around distinct workstreams: someone owns policy and intergovernmental relationships; someone manages grants and contracts; someone holds community engagement and outreach; someone tracks language access compliance; and leadership carries the cross-cutting coordination and external representation work. These are not redundant roles; they reflect genuinely different skill sets, relationships, and time demands that cannot be reliably doubled up without degrading quality.

Staff-to-Function Ratios

The comparison table shows that even the leanest offices maintain roughly one dedicated staff member per major functional area. Santa Clara's five staff map cleanly onto contracting, program management, policy, community coordination, and analysis. San Francisco's 35 staff reflect the same logic at scale – with multiple people per function as volume demands. A seven-person OIRA would average one staff member per core function, with leadership absorbing cross-cutting work. That is not generous – it is the minimum the functional model requires.

The “Borrowed Staff” Warning Sign

Chicago's office – operating with three budgeted positions – has to borrow a policy director and community liaison from a sister agency just to maintain baseline operations. This is a flashing warning sign, not a model to emulate. When an office cannot staff its own policy and engagement functions, those workstreams become contingent on another department's priorities and bandwidth. OIRA should not launch in a configuration that requires borrowed capacity to function.

Budget Benchmarks

Across the scan, per-capita and proportional spending tells a consistent story:

- NYC invests roughly \$50M in MOIA operations alone, plus ~\$139M in deportation defense – reflecting the scale of need but also the institutional commitment required to meet it.
- Seattle/King County operates a 13-person office on \$10.6M, with \$2.5M flowing to deportation defense – roughly \$615K per FTE in total office investment.
- Santa Clara runs \$6-8M through a five-person office, meaning the vast majority of dollars are contract dollars managed by staff. At that ratio, each staff member is effectively stewarding \$1-1.5M in contracts in addition to their program responsibilities.
- Baltimore County – the closest comparison to where Alameda is starting – has three staff, no programming budget beyond salaries, and by their own account cannot yet operationalize tiers 2 or 3 of their intended model. They are explicit that current staffing is a constraint, not a choice.

The Infrastructure Gap

Several offices in the scan noted that understaffing at launch created what one described as “structural debt” – backlogs in contract management, broken community relationships from over-promising leading to unmet commitments, and policy opportunities missed because no one had capacity to engage. Orange County's single social worker model is the clearest example: one Director and one Social Worker cannot simultaneously manage intake, coordinate across departments, build CBO relationships, and develop policy. The result is an office permanently in triage mode.

The implication for Alameda: if OIRA is expected to manage a meaningful portfolio of CBO contracts and deportation defense, act as a clearinghouse for referrals and service navigation, and drive policy implementation across the County – to name just a few of the CAB recommended priorities – each staff member will carry significant contracting and program management responsibility on top of their functional role. The office only works with enough people to distribute the load.

CAB Insights on Staffing Structure

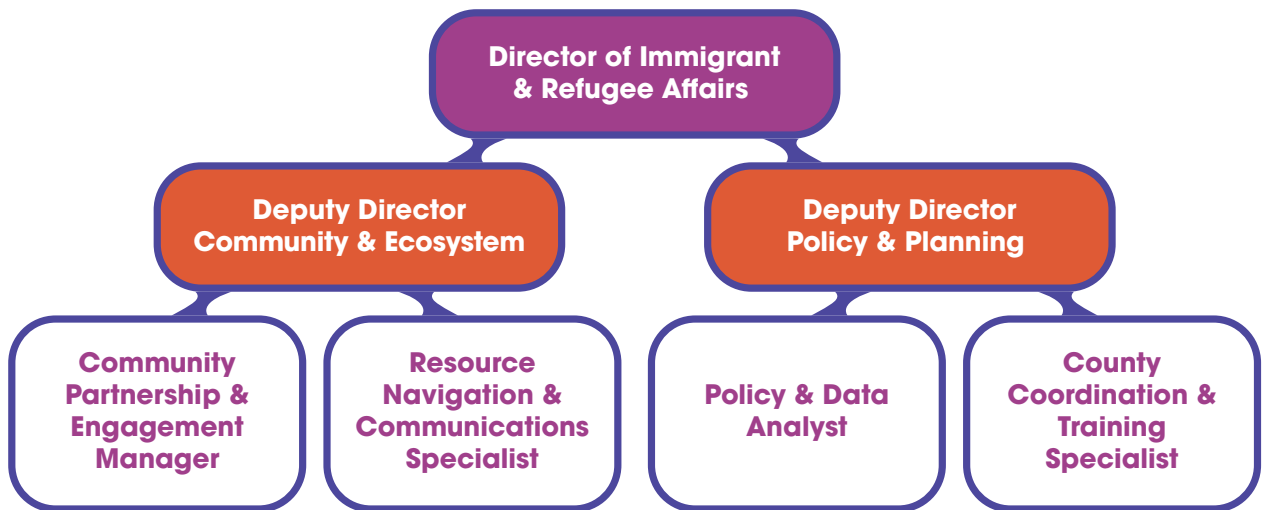
The CAB concludes that two staff cannot operationalize this mandate. The eight functions the CAB has identified as OIRA's core responsibilities – community partnership, needs assessment, navigation and clearinghouse, public-private partnership development, county coordination and compliance, policy advocacy, communications, and learning and innovation – are not interchangeable. Each requires sustained attention, specialized expertise, and consistent relationship-holding that cannot rotate through a single generalist position.

The CAB's proposed seven-person model is modeled on the least resourced offices. Santa Clara County, one of the leaner offices reviewed, operates with five staff and a budget of \$6-8M, the majority of which flows to contracts. Chicago's three-person core team, widely acknowledged as understaffed, relies on borrowed positions from sister agencies just to maintain basic functions. Even at seven staff, OIRA will require careful sequencing of responsibilities and will not be able to fully operationalize all functions at launch.

This recommendation represents the minimum infrastructure needed to avoid the risk of an office that exists on paper, absorbs community trust, and cannot deliver. An office of two staff managing contracts, fielding community requests, tracking compliance across County departments, and developing policy simultaneously is not a lean office. It is a set-up for exactly the kind of coordination collapse the CAB is trying to prevent.

Understanding that Alameda County is facing resource constraints, the CAB endorses a fully staffed office in order to deliver on OIRA's potential to respond to the current crisis while also laying the groundwork for a more welcoming Alameda County in the long term. The CAB recommends the following office staffing structure.

The CAB recommends establishing a Director-level position, and putting the Director in place first so the Director can build out their team. The **Director of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs** will have responsibility for convening department heads and seconds, intergovernmental affairs (including Interdepartmental Coordination Table Chair) and peer jurisdiction relationship building, maintaining the CAB relationship throughout the Pilot Phase, learning and innovation, guiding policy development and advocacy, OIRA workplan benchmarking and progress reporting to BOS, and overseeing the structured review of pilot phase.



Because it is critical to find the right person for this role, the CAB took time to brainstorm key characteristics and qualifications. This role requires genuine political savvy: the ability to influence department heads through relational authority, not just formal authority, and an understanding of the political landscape beyond Alameda County. Equally important, the Director must be community-grounded – place-based, culturally competent, with existing Bay Area connections, and oriented toward service and alignment rather than personal agenda. The Director must be a strong listener who can hold diverse and competing community perspectives without flattening them – but not conflict-avoidant. This person should be a confident problem-solver who will advocate strongly on behalf of the communities the office serves. Finally, a learning and innovation orientation is essential: the office will need to adapt rapidly in a shifting policy environment, and the Director sets the tone for that culture. A background in at least one of the following is strongly preferred: immigration legal services, direct social services, advocacy and policy, or community organizing. Experience with budgeting and fundraising – including managing private funding through foundation or partner structures – is essential given the office's early reliance on philanthropic support.

Beyond the Director, a fully staffed office would ideally include the following roles. Please note, the titles offered are intended to support clarity around role focus, not civil service classifications.

Deputy Director, Community & Ecosystem

Owens the external-facing, community-rooted work, with direct responsibility for: Learning & innovation function; cross-jurisdictional peer office relationships; sustainability planning for post-pilot community accountability structure; supporting community collaborative capacity development

- **Community Partnership & Engagement Manager** – CBO contracts relationships & compliance/evaluation, CAB coordination, community collaboration plan, rapid response and mutual aid network liaison
- **Resource Navigation & Communications Specialist** – Multilingual clearinghouse/referral database, referral protocol development and tracking, public-facing communications, website/newcomers portal

Deputy Director, Policy & Planning

Owens the internal government-facing and compliance work, with direct responsibility for: Interdepartmental Coordination Table coordination; departmental budget and alignment with Office of Equity planning (as needed); cross-department policy implementation tracking; federal and state policy guidance coordination with County Counsel

- **Policy & Data Analyst** – Population needs assessment and status report, immigrant & refugee budget tracking, federal/state policy monitoring, data workgroup coordination
- **County Coordination & Training Specialist** – Language Access Ordinance implementation, contract management and compliance, ICE-Free Zones/Response Plan coordination, staff training

This structure balances strategy, internal government coordination, and community-facing work across the full scope of the office's mandate.

Community Accountability & Partnership: How the Office Stays Accountable to the Communities It Serves

“Through trust, personalized guidance, and a constant presence, community organizations break down barriers such as fear, language differences, and misinformation.”

- Community Advisory Body Member

This section describes how OIRA will build and maintain genuine partnership with the community organizations, coalitions, and residents it serves. The goal is not to create new structures for their own sake – it is to resource, connect, and stay accountable to what already exists, while building the infrastructure that will carry this work beyond the pilot phase.

Learning from What Exists

National models offer several proven approaches to building accountability and collaboration between county structures and community partners:

Model	Practice
Santa Clara County	Monthly convenings for all contracted CBOs
Orange County	Annual immigrant summit bringing together deportation defense providers, advocates, and elected officials
New York City	Regular meetings with grantee organizations organized by city region and service area
San Francisco	Language access education and support sessions bringing together CBOs and county agencies

What these models share is a recognition that accountability structures need to be regular, relational, and resourced – not occasional and performative. Specifically, in San Francisco, the agency provides monthly reports, along with quarterly language access complaints reports to the Immigrant Rights Commission, as required by the language access ordinance. In general, the IRC has an informal oversight role as the entity responsible for advocating on immigrant issues.

Before designing any new structures, OIRA must understand and honor what is already operating. Alameda County has a rich and active ecosystem of community coordination that has been doing this work. A partial map of known community collaboration structures operating in Alameda County – generated by the CAB – can be found in [Appendix 7](#). A more complete inventory is an early priority for OIRA (see the 2-year priorities workplan).

CAB Insights on Guiding Principles for Community Collaboration & Accountability

These principles should govern every decision OIRA makes about how it engages with community structures – from how it writes contracts to how it decides whether to show up at a community meeting.

Amplify what’s already working. Organic, robust community coordination is already underway across Alameda County. OIRA’s first move should be to understand, resource, and connect that infrastructure – not to build parallel structures that duplicate or crowd it out. This includes and extends beyond the collaboratives that participated in the CAB.

The right convenor depends on the context. Sometimes the County is the right entity to bring people together – particularly when the goal is breaking down silos, sharing information across geographies or populations, or driving accountability. Other times, community autonomy is paramount and County presence would constrain rather than enable. OIRA should be available to participate in community-led structures when invited, without expecting or requiring a seat at every table. When an elected representative calls for a space, it can motivate providers to engage.

Fund collaboration — don’t mandate it. Genuine partnership cannot be contracted into existence. Contracts should create the conditions and resources for collaboration without predetermining who partners with whom, how, or where. Leave room for organic relationships to form and deepen.

County-convened spaces should focus on learning and connection, not control. Where the County does convene, the purpose should be clear: sharing information, surfacing emerging needs, building relationships across geography and population, and strengthening the overall ecosystem. These are not compliance meetings – they are investments in collective capacity.

Be a proactive, accountable partner to contractors. The County’s relationship with contracted service providers should go beyond monitoring deliverables. OIRA should regularly convene contractors to support cross-provider learning, collective troubleshooting, and technical assistance – treating the contractor network as a community of practice, not just a service delivery mechanism.

Build toward durable, community-owned accountability infrastructure. The Community Advisory Body is the right accountability structure for the pilot phase – but the goal should be bigger. During the pilot, OIRA should actively support public and private investment in building community-owned accountability infrastructure that will outlast any single office or administration.

CAB Recommendation for Community Collaboration and Accountability

The CAB focused its recommendations on a structure for accountability for the pilot phase specifically, with an emphasis on building community capacity to transition to new accountability structures post-pilot phase. The key design principle is that the CAB acts as a bridge between OIRA and the community. The diagram below shows how OIRA, the CAB, and the broader community ecosystem are intended to relate during the pilot phase.

1. Extend and expand the CAB through the end of the pilot phase.

The pilot-phase Community Advisory Body should continue in an advisory and accountability capacity through Year 1. Before extending, go through a deliberate process to reconfirm commitment from existing members and expand membership to address known gaps in representation – geographic, linguistic, and by population served. The CAB’s role in the pilot phase is not just to advise on workplan priorities but to model what genuine community accountability looks like, and to help design the durable structure that will replace it at the end of the pilot.

2. Map to existing community collaboration infrastructure before building anything new.

As an early priority, OIRA should conduct a systematic mapping of existing coalitions, convenings, and coordination spaces across the county – including who convenes them, who participates, and where county presence is welcome or not. From this map, OIRA can develop an engagement plan that prioritizes participation where needs and threats are highest, without assuming the county should lead or even participate.

3. Convene all county contractors regularly.

Establish a regular convening for all organizations under county contract for immigrant and refugee services. The purpose is not reporting but practice: cross-provider learning, collective troubleshooting, and technical assistance. This convening is county-led because it is about the county’s own contractor ecosystem, not about community coordination broadly.

4. Initiate regularly scheduled county-wide convenings open to all.

Separately from contractor convenings, establish a regular county-wide convening open to all immigrant and refugee-serving organizations – contracted or not. This is an ecosystem-building space that supports resource and information sharing, not a compliance space. It should be designed and facilitated in partnership with community organizations, not run by county staff alone.

5. Resource collaboration — through contracts and through private fundraising.

The county should revise contract language to explicitly support and fund cross-sector collaboration among grantees. Simultaneously, OIRA should support private fundraising efforts aimed at growing resources for building community organization capacity for coordination/ collaboration independent of county funding.

6. Partner with existing collaborative spaces — including but not limited to the collaboratives that participated in the CAB (ACUDIR, ACILEP, and ACCoRD) to build their capacity as partners in post-pilot accountability.

During the pilot phase, OIRA should invest actively in building collaborative capacity among core collaboratives that together cover a range of critical functions in the county (emergency response, deportation defense, organizing, etc) – through funding, technical assistance, and relationships. The idea is that, by the end of Year 2, there is a robust array of community collaboratives that have strong relationships with each positioned to act as accountability partners to OIRA. In this way the county will resource existing collaboratives that have earned community trust to act as both bridge and monitor, and build their capacity.



CAB serves as bridge during pilot phase; Community Collaboratives with expanded capacity to hold accountability post-pilot

A Budget that Meets the Moment: What level of investment is needed to address short term priorities and sustain in the long-term

Learning from What Exists

Our review of other county office models shows that the offices that are most effective are not funded as one-time experiments. They are resourced as ongoing infrastructure. Most administer funds through their own office budgets or from separate county and city sources that entrust the office to contract with CBOs and oversee service delivery. Funds are allocated across three primary areas: rapid response, deportation defense and affirmative immigration legal services, and community organizing. These resources are ongoing and committed – not one-time emergency allocations – and office staff actively advocate to augment them over time.

Alameda County has made meaningful emergency investments over the past year. The work now is to convert those investments into a durable funding architecture.



Ongoing and committed – not one-time. Staff advocate actively for augmented resources.

What the County Has Already Committed

The Board has approved a baseline staffing and operations budget for the pilot phase. This is the foundation on which the recommendations below build – not a replacement for it.

The baseline 2-year \$450k staffing commitment (against the requested \$485k) provides a real starting point. The recommendations below identify what additional investment is needed to make that starting point functional.

Beyond staffing, there are already a number of cross-agency functions being held in different agencies within the County. This includes language access services and management of the newcomer website currently held by AC health at minimum, but most likely a full audit will reveal other contracts held in one agency but serving a cross-agency purpose. As OIRA stands up, the office should work with each agency to determine which contracts it should take over management for. The Board should also consider moving language access-related contracts as well as any other contracts that serve a cross-agency function such as the [Newcomer website](#) maintenance to OIRA, consolidating coordination and accountability in one place.

CAB Recommendations for the Pilot Phase Budget

The five budget areas below correspond directly to the five pilot phase priorities. Together they describe what it will cost to do this work – not at full scale, but at a credible starting point.

Category	Description	Annual Investment
Deportation defense, emergency response, and community organizing contract renewals, expansions, and additions as needed.	Signal your intention to continue partnering with the community collaboratives for deportation defense, emergency response, and community organizing by securing ongoing funding for their work, while also expanding the total budget beyond what is needed for renewals alone. Work closely with contractors to assess their impact to date, as well as support their individual and collective success, while also initiating a needs assessment to determine what gaps remain and move to establish new contracts that fill those gaps. When preparing to renew existing contracts or establish new ones, engage in a transparent process. Collaboration across providers must be explicitly designed for – it cannot be assumed.	\$4.63M
7-Member Staff	Estimated at \$275K salary + benefits x 7 staff. Inclusive of the \$450K already allocated to staff positions created in SSA	\$1.92M
Implementation Operating Budget	A budget to support contractors, consultants, and programming support.	\$450K
Philanthropic Support	A consistent contribution from philanthropy to support innovation and emergency response – two of the hardest areas for counties to fund.	\$3M
Total Investment	County Ask: \$7M Philanthropic Ask: \$3M	\$10M

Budget Narrative

1. Deportation Defense, Emergency Response, and Community Organizing Contract Renewals

Maintain funding for current services to ensure continuity, while immediately initiating a needs assessment and RFP process to clarify required capacities and equitably fund providers. If an RFP cannot be launched in time, extend current grantees with a clear plan to complete assessment and procurement within the following year. Build explicit expectations or resourcing for cross-provider collaboration, including facilitation to support effective coordination.

2. Staffing

Supplement the approved \$450k baseline with a Director-level position, classified and compensated at a level commensurate with the authority the role requires. The highest-priority additions beyond the initial three positions are a Community Engagement and Contracts Management Specialist and a Community Assessment and Program Planning Specialist.

3. Implementation Operating Budget

At minimum \$450,000 annually for population needs assessment, clearinghouse technology build-out, referral platform participation, convenings, communications, and contingencies.

4. Contractor Collaboration

Restructure existing CBO contracts – not just those held by OIRA, but across County agencies – to include dedicated collaboration line items – allowing grantees to spend time and resources on cross-sector coordination without it falling outside their scope of work.

5. Public-Private Partnership

The CAB invites philanthropy to create a dedicated fund supporting the overall implementation of this plan where county funding is insufficient for a committed period of 3-5 years. The County should commit to replacing this funding at the end of the funding timeline to ensure sustainability.

The county has already committed to this work. These recommendations and funding will allow the County to work strategically, with a coordinating infrastructure that makes every dollar go further.

Pilot Phase Priorities

What the Office Will Do

OIRA is being launched in a moment of acute and evolving need, where community demand, policy shifts, and system pressures are all accelerating at once. This creates both urgency and uncertainty in determining what the office must prioritize in its first two years.

Drawing on the research available, the CAB developed a set of priorities to reflect a deliberate sequencing from building the internal foundation needed for the office to function, to stabilizing the broader ecosystem, to advancing community-facing systems and policy implementation. At the same time, this sequencing is not fixed. OIRA leadership should expect to revisit and adapt priorities as conditions shift. Additionally, this set of priorities assumes a fully staffed, 7-person office. The workplan will need to be revised to align with staffing capacity as needed.

The table below links each standing function of the office to its corresponding pilot-phase priority and defines the outcome each priority is intended to achieve by the end of the two-year pilot. A more detailed two-year workplan for advancing the five priorities is included in [Appendix 8: Two-Year Work Plan](#).

Pilot Phase Priority	Pilot Phase Outcome	Core Function(s)
P1: Build the Foundation for Long-Term County Integration	An interdepartmental coordination table with real authority; a policy tracking and guidance function; a permanent budget line; alignment with the Office of Equity	County Coordination, Compliance & Capacity Building
Year 1 — Build • Hire Director and staff • Establish a standing Interdepartmental Coordination Table (OIRA-ICT) • Develop a policy tracking and guidance function • Refine 2-year workplan • Align department planning – particularly budget and staffing Year 2 — Strengthen • Establish OIRA as a permanent budget line-item • Formalize OIRA-ICT • Conduct a structured review of OIRA pilot phase and make recommendations from this review to inform the transition from pilot to permanent office • Begin planning for structural transition		

Pilot Phase Priority	Pilot Phase Outcome	Core Function(s)
P2: Assess Needs, Identify Vulnerabilities & Stabilize the Ecosystem	A shared picture of who the county is serving and where gaps exist; a stable, multi-year-funded CBO infrastructure; a population data workgroup informing program and budget decisions.	Population Needs Assessment & Evaluation; Public-Private Partnership
Year 1 — Build • Evaluate and extend/expand as needed existing deportation defense, emergency response, and organizing contracts through 2028 at augmented funding levels; bring on new contractors as needed • Map the current funding for immigrant and refugee services to pinpoint vulnerabilities; work with BOS to avoid harmful cuts • Update the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs report list of relevant activities by department • Launch a “OIRA Population Data Workgroup” that works in partnership with a stipended group of community organizations to inform service and program planning • Champion a shift to multi-year flexible support as a way to build longer term resilience of the CBO infrastructure Year 2 — Strengthen • Continue to refine OIRA community contracts as needed • Release population status report and Ad Hoc Committee Report update; standardization population data reporting moving forward • Develop an annual “Immigrant and Refugee Budget” • Use population status report to adjust contractors’ scopes as needed • Communicate to BOS where CBO capacity is insufficient and need is documented		

Pilot Phase Priority	Pilot Phase Outcome	Core Function(s)
P3: Build a County-Wide Hub for Resource Navigation & Warm Referrals	A multilingual resource database maintained by a CBO partner; shared referral protocols across county and CBO providers; a pilot intake platform	Clearinghouse & Navigation Hub; Learning & Innovation
<i>NOTE: Given the recommended staffing structure and budget, this office should build systems that support more effective and efficient referrals and service navigation for the County's community-based partners and community facing staff, not navigation and referral services for community members individually.</i> Year 1 — Build • Map all existing County contracts related to immigrant and refugee affairs into a single multilingual resource database • Map and formally recognize existing rapid response and mutual aid networks • Establish referral protocols between OIRA, CBOs, and County departments – documented, shared, and trained across partners • Develop system for tracking referral data quarterly • Launch a pilot to develop one standard intake and referral platform used across immigrant and refugee facing service providers Year 2 — Strengthen • Roll-out new website/clearinghouse, including training, collateral, outreach • Report to BOS public referral tracking data and make recommendations ongoing resourcing • Assess efficacy of online services database and referral protocols • Explore multilingual AI-assisted navigation tools		

Pilot Phase Priority	Pilot Phase Outcome	Core Function(s)
P4: Coordinate Implementation of Existing County-Wide Policies	Language access compliance infrastructure with real enforcement; ICE-Free Zones implemented across all county facilities; a functioning countywide Response Plan with community co-developed scenario plans	Policy Development & Advocacy; Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

Year 1 — Build

- Establish OIRA as the county's language access and Response Plans technical assistance & accountability office
 - Convene language access liaisons in each Department to:
 - Map the language resources: 1) that are currently provided in the County, 2) provided by CBOs, 3) alignment with population needed data
 - Review each Department's language access activities to date
 - Identify training gaps and develop training plan
 - Provide technical assistance trainings and capacity building interventions
 - Ensure county-facing digital entry points are accessible in threshold languages in no more than 2 clicks
- Work with OIRA ICT to implement the ICE-Free Zones policy and countywide Response Plan directive, including:
 - Develop written rapid-response protocols and physical security procedures
 - Share progress towards ICE-Free Zones implementation requirements
 - Develop staff training priorities and workplan
 - Create a public facing communications plan, including for crisis response
 - Develop written scenario plans – co-developed with community partners
 - Formally connect to rapid response and mutual aid networks

Year 2 — Strengthen

- Continue driving Language Access Ordinance implementation, including:
 - Develop a language access complaint system for community members
 - Publish an annual language access report by department
 - Develop system for sharing language access data and resources with CBOs
 - Develop ongoing system for language access training and compliance
 - Develop outreach strategy for communities underutilizing services
 - Design a community-based audit compliance monitoring system
- OIRA ICT continues to prioritize coordination on ICE response planning, including:
 - Coordinate live sessions to practice emergency response scenario plans
 - Amend existing rapid response contracts to include formal mutual aid coordination
 - Work with ACILEP to establish a real-time information-sharing protocol
 - Implement associated trainings to all county-facing staff as needed
 - Evaluate rapid response contract coverage and amend sole-source agreements to close gaps in reach to underserved communities
 - Assess progress toward developing a comprehensive and effective countywide Response Plan

Pilot Phase Priority	Pilot Phase Outcome	Core Function(s)
P5: Build Community Accountability, Partnership & Transparency	A Community Advisory Body with real influence over OIRA priorities; contractor and cross-county convenings; a durable, community-owned accountability structure ready to carry the work beyond the pilot phase	Community Partnership & Engagement
Year 1 — Build - Establish a Quarterly Community Advisory Body (CAB) through an open application process that selects for representation across a number of factors; CAB approves refined OIRA workplan, reviews year-1 progress, and makes recommendations for any shifts in year-2 priorities - Develop & Implement County-led Community Collaboration Plan, to include the following: - Map County-led convenings of its immigrant and refugee serving contractors; establish regular technical assistance meetings as needed - Partner with community collaboratives – including but not limited to ACUDIR, ACCoRD, ACILEP, EBRIF – in initiating regularly scheduled County-wide convenings open to all immigrant and refugee serving organizations - Map existing community-led collaboratives and prioritize OIRA participation/partnership based on community needs - Map key community collaboratives, develop plan for building capacity of collaboratives most poised to serve as community-owned accountability structures post-pilot - Pilot changes to county contracts that give contractors more flexibility to participate in collaborative efforts - Set-up a structure for public-private partnership for OIRA to receive and redistribute funds to CBOs Year 2 — Strengthen - Continue CAB quarterly meetings - CAB revise and advise on recommendations for all aspects of OIRA post-pilot phase - Prepare to shift accountability from CAB to community-owned structures - Continue implementing Community Collaboration Plan, to include recommendations on what to sustain post-pilot phase - Based on Year 1 pilot feedback with County contractors, refine and roll out changes to all applicable County contracts to allow for more collaboration - In partnership with community collaboratives, develop sustainability plan and engage in philanthropic fundraising - Develop proactive public communications plan on office and County agency activities related to immigrants and refugees		

Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations that follow translate a clear and consistent finding across this study: Alameda County does not lack commitment, resources, or community expertise – it lacks the coordinated infrastructure to bring these elements into alignment. Drawing from stakeholder input, national models, and the lived realities of immigrant and refugee communities, this set of recommendations outlines a path to move from fragmented efforts to a more integrated, accountable, and durable system. Together, they reflect both the urgency of the current moment and the longer-term vision of building an office capable of sustaining impact across changing conditions.

Recommendation: Mission & Vision

VISION

A county where strong public infrastructure, partnerships, and data-informed policies, programs, and strategies ensure immigrant and refugee communities are supported, protected from harm, and able to fully participate in the social, civic, and economic life of the region.

MISSION

To build and sustain the infrastructure that supports immigrant communities by convening partners, coordinating programs and services, analyzing data to identify gaps, and advancing policies and investments that strengthen outcomes for immigrant and refugee residents.

Recommendation: Core Functions



Community Partnership & Engagement

- Convening community-led efforts
- Elevating voice in policy & budget
- Managing CBO contracts for rapid response, legal services & engagement



Population Needs Assessment Planning & Evaluation

- Ongoing assessment of needs, service utilization & gaps
- Shared indicators with community partners & County departments
- Ecosystem mapping



Clearinghouse & Navigation Hub

- Maintaining a multilingual hub for service referrals and county system navigation to connect residents with what they need



Public-Private Partnership Development

- Cultivating private resources to complement public funding
- Blending streams to support innovation, collaboration & community power



County Coordination, Compliance & Capacity Building

- Coordinating cross-departmental policy implementation and compliance
- Technical assistance and training
- Language access and other rights (such as labor) complaint and response tracking



Policy Development & Advocacy

- Monitoring & shaping policy at local, state & federal levels
- Advancing immigrant-inclusive policy from within County government



Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

- Public-facing communications to share information & shape narrative
- Coordinating with peer offices to align strategies & leverage opportunities



Learning & Innovation

- Ongoing cross-jurisdictional learning
- Identifying & sharing best practices
- Building the County's capacity to adapt to changing conditions & emerging needs

These functions represent OIRA's permanent, standing responsibilities – independent of political context or phase of implementation.

Recommendation: Office Placement & Staffing

VISION

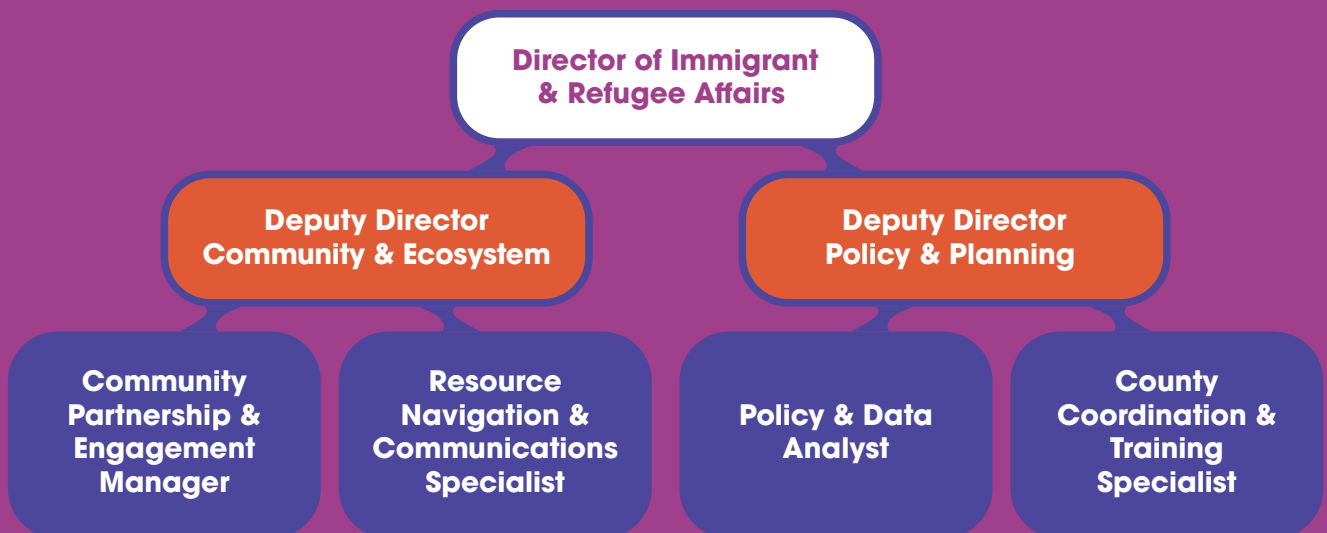
The CAB envisions OIRA as an independent entity within the County, with a two-year incubation period supported by a host department. Conversations with the Steering Committee and county staff clarified that the CAB does not have sufficient intra-county administrative insight to prescribe a specific placement but it can and does define the conditions that placement must meet.

MISSION

The hosting department or office should demonstrate:

- A champion at the agency level
- Track record of county collaboration
- Strong reputation of trust with BOS and CAO
- Incubation structure that supports transition to independence
- Strong community connections
- Access to operational infrastructure (contracting, HR, communications)
- Formal accountability mechanisms built in from the start

Recommendation: Pilot Phase Staffing Model



We propose positions with specific functions, but leave identifying levels and titles to County staff.

Recommendation: Community Accountability Structure

“Through trust, personalized guidance, and a constant presence, community organizations break down barriers such as fear, language differences, and misinformation.”

- Community Advisory Body Member

1 Extend and Expand the CAB

Continue the pilot-phase Community Advisory Body through Year 2. Reconfirm member commitment and expand membership to address gaps in geographic, linguistic, and population representation.

2 Map Before Building

Conduct a systematic mapping of existing coalitions, convenings, and coordination spaces across the county before building any new structures, honoring what community organizations have built.

3 Convene County Contractors Regularly

Establish regular convenings monthly or quarterly for all organizations under county contract. The purpose is cross-provider learning and collective troubleshooting, not compliance reporting.

4 County-Wide Ecosystem Convenings

Separately establish regular county-wide convenings open to all immigrant and refugee-serving organizations, designed in partnership with community not run by county staff alone.

5 Fund Collaboration Through Contracts

Revise contract language to explicitly fund cross-sector collaboration among grantees, and support private fundraising efforts that build community capacity independent of county funding.

6 Invest in Community-owned Collaboratives as Post-Pilot Accountability Anchors

There are already community-run collaboratives that can provide infrastructure for durable, community-owned accountability structure. During the pilot, invest in building their capacity so they are ready to serve as the ongoing accountability bodies for a permanent OIRA.

Recommendation: \$10M+ Budget

The question before the Board is not whether to spend money on immigrant and refugee services; that decision has been made, repeatedly and unanimously. The question is whether to spend it strategically, with a coordinating infrastructure that makes every dollar go further, or to continue spending it in fragmented ways that produce fragmented results.

1

Contract Renewals

3 contracts · min.
through June 2028

\$4.63M/yr

Most urgent action; maintain continuity of services while initiating reassessment and RFP. Offer of support for coordination across collaborations will enhance impact. Must be authorized prior to/in conjunction with office launch.

2

Staffing

Supplement \$450K
baseline with
Director-level position

\$1.92M

Assumes 7 staff at an average of \$275K salary + benefits.

3

Implementation Operating Budget

- Needs assessment
- Clearinghouse
- Referral platform
- Convenings

\$450K/yr

Minimum needed to operationalize core functions.

4

Public-Private Partnership Fund

- Deportation defense
- Healing services
 - Community organizing
 - Coalitions

\$3M

Establish a dedicated philanthropic fund to support power building, mutual aid, innovation, and crisis response.

Recommendation: 2-Year Pilot Phase Priorities

Before any of these priorities are fully operational, the most urgent task is ensuring existing rapid response infrastructure does not collapse while the office is being stood up extending contracts, resourcing the hotline, and supporting community organizations during the gap.

P1

Build the Foundation for Long-Term County Integration

END-OF-PILOT OUTCOME: An interdepartmental coordination table with real authority; a policy tracking and guidance function; permanent budget line

P2

Assess Needs, Identify Vulnerabilities & Stabilize the CBO Ecosystem

END-OF-PILOT OUTCOME: A shared picture of who the county is serving and where gaps exist; a stable, multi-year-funded CBO infrastructure; a population data workgroup informing program and budget decisions; contract evaluation practices in place.

P3

Build a County-Wide Hub for Resource Navigation & Warm Referrals

END-OF-PILOT OUTCOME: A multilingual resource database; shared referral protocols across county and CBO providers; a pilot intake platform.

P4

Coordinate Implementation of Existing County-Wide Policies

END-OF-PILOT OUTCOME: Language access compliance infrastructure with real enforcement; ICE-Free Zones implemented across all county facilities; a functioning countywide Response Plan with community co-developed scenario plans.

P5

Build Community Accountability, Partnership & Transparency

END-OF-PILOT OUTCOME: A Community Advisory Board with real influence over OIRA priorities; contractor and cross-county convenings; capacity of existing collaboratives built to serve as community-owned accountability mechanism beyond the pilot.

Conclusion

This report began with a question the Community Advisory Body kept returning to throughout its work: are we building toward what the community and the County's own history are calling for, or are we settling for something smaller because it feels more manageable?

The answer this report offers is neither. It is something more honest than both.

Alameda County is not starting from zero. The political will is real. The community infrastructure is real. The legal defense capacity, the rapid response networks, the protective policies across county departments, the decades of relationship-building by community organizations that have shown up for immigrant and refugee residents through every political moment – all of it is real. What has been missing is not commitment. It is the connective tissue that turns commitment into coordinated, accountable, durable action.

That is what OIRA is designed to be.

But this report would be doing the county a disservice if it left the impression that standing up this office is primarily a technical challenge. It is not. The harder work is cultural and political: convincing every county department that the needs of immigrant and refugee residents are their responsibility too; building accountability structures that genuinely center community voice rather than performing it; resisting the pull toward doing whatever is easiest and fastest in a moment of acute crisis, at the expense of building something that will last.

The community members who contributed to this process – through interviews, through the focus group, through the work of the Community Advisory Body – did not ask for a symbol. They asked for infrastructure. They asked for an office with real authority, real resources, and a genuine relationship with the communities it serves. They asked for a county that sees them not as a problem to be managed, but as people with rights, contributions, and the capacity for leadership when given the conditions to thrive.

One focus group participant described working with a newly arrived immigrant mother who came in afraid, unable to navigate even the most basic systems, and who – through sustained support and genuine relationship – eventually became a community leader herself, helping others find what she had found. That trajectory – from survival to leadership, from fear to agency – is what this office is ultimately for. Not as an exceptional story, but as the norm this county is capable of creating if it builds the right infrastructure and funds it accordingly.

The recommendations in this report are grounded in research, shaped by community wisdom, and designed to be actionable. They are not a ceiling – they are a floor. The office this report envisions for Year 2 is not the office Alameda County ultimately needs. It is the office from which the right office can be built, if the County makes the decisions described here with clarity and urgency.

The County has the will. The community has the knowledge. What comes next is the hard, unglamorous, essential work of building the infrastructure that connects them – and holding it accountable to the people it was always meant to serve.

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Appendix 1

Summary of Actions on Key Recommendation from The State of Immigrant and Refugee Rights in Alameda County 2021 report to the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights

The following is a summary table that lists whether action has been taken on the key recommendations from the 2021 Final Report of the Alameda County Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Pass a County-Wide Ordinance Disallowing Immigration Enforcement Assistance and Information Sharing This report recommends passing a county-wide ordinance prohibiting to the fullest extent possible under local, state, and federal law, the use of county resources, personnel time, or facilities for the purpose of enforcing immigration laws, including a prohibition without exception of assisting ICE, Customs and Border Protection, and any agencies or companies working on their behalf in making arrests, detaining and transferring individuals to ICE custody, or notifying ICE of inmate release information.	Board of Supervisors	Yes
Review the Sheriff's Office Inmate Release Process for Individuals with ICE Detainers In line with the California Values Act (SB54), ACSO policy states that staff may not hold individual inmates beyond their point of release for the purpose of holding someone for immigration enforcement purposes. To assess the release process and the implementation of this ACSO policy, this review sought the movement logs for individuals in ACSO jails who had received ICE I-247A notification requests or detainer request forms. Despite repeated requests for these logs, the ACSO did not provide them to the office of Supervisor Richard Valle or to the author for review. Nonetheless, oversight and verification of the release process of inmates for whom ICE has lodged an I-247A detainer or notification of release request is crucial. Immigrants held beyond the point of release on their criminal charges by other county sheriff's offices on account of a detainer request have sued and won significant settlements for violations of their constitutional rights. As recent as mid-November 2021, the ACLU sued the Sacramento Sheriff on these grounds. This report recommends that the Board of Supervisors directs the Sheriff to provide the movement log records to the County Administrator's Office. It is further recommended that the Board of Supervisors directs the County Administrator's Office to conduct a review of the movement logs. These logs records should include all individuals for which the ACSO has received I-247A forms and compare them to the movement logs for a subset of the inmate population released for similar charges after no I-247A form was lodged and report findings back to the Board.	Board of Supervisors	Sheriff no longer responds to I-247A requests

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Continue Funding for the Public Defender Immigration Representation Unit to Conduct Federal Impact Litigation and “Padilla” Consultations The Public Defender Immigration Representation Unit provides counsel to non-citizens and their lawyers to understand the immigration consequences of their criminal cases. However, changes in state and federal law have made preparation for and the provision of these consultations, known as Padilla consults, much more involved. The need for Padilla consults is outpacing the unit’s capacity to provide them. Currently, the Padilla attorney is a part-time position. The unit’s managing attorney estimates that a 1.0 FTE position is needed to meet this need. This report recommends that the Board of Supervisors allocates funding to expand the Padilla position to a full-time Associate Deputy Public Defender position to allow the Immigration Representation Unit to carry out necessary Padilla consult services. Further, the Immigration Representation Unit provides direct representation in federal courts to clients facing detention and deportation after contact with the criminal legal system. The Board should consider utilizing local funding to create an Associate Deputy Public Defender position in the unit for federal litigation. This position would advance the unit’s pathbreaking work to set new legal precedent through cutting edge “impact litigation” in federal court. This litigation takes ICE to court to systematically to stop ICE from carrying out expeditious practices all over the nation that deny immigrant rights, deny immigrants access to legal counsel, and make it harder for immigrants to win in their removal cases. The unit currently supports federal litigation work through the work of a fellow who is supported by two years of foundation and grant funding. This report recommends that the County fund a full-time Associate Deputy Public Defender solely dedicated to focusing on and carrying out federal impact litigation related to the defense of individuals facing detention and deportation. It is estimated that fully funding this recommendation of 1.5 FTE additional Associate Deputy Public Defender positions would require up to an additional annual allocation of \$360,222.00 in 2021 dollars.	Board of Supervisors	Yes
Expand Funding for Community-based Organizations to Provide Immigration Legal Services Funding for immigration legal advice, removal defense, Know Your Rights training, and network building between county agencies and local immigration legal organizations stabilizes the immigrant community that might be otherwise untrusting of local government institutions and staff. Expand funding for a community-based legal organization or group of organizations such as Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership to provide additional legal services in Alameda County immigrant and refugee communities, with a particular focus on Fremont, Tri-Valleys, Newark, and Livermore.	Board of Supervisors	Yes

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Increase Earmarked Funding to the District Attorney for Immigrant Community Outreach and Assisting Immigrant Victims of Crime Allocate greater resources specifically earmarked for the purpose of conducting community outreach to let community members know what the District Attorney's Office's capacity is and what it can do with and for immigrants. Allocate additional funds for immigration lawyers to help victims of crime by expanding their functions to include carrying out investigations in the community with victims of crime in private settings. The estimated cost to implement this recommendation is approximately \$563,172.00 to fully fund one FTE Deputy District Attorney and two FTE victim advocate positions.	Board of Supervisors	No, out of concern this may unintentionally publicly identify undocumented immigrants
Create the Alameda County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Create a central county agency under the authority of the County Administrator's Office tasked with providing support to the Board and to the various county agencies on immigrant issues, education, training, informational resources; work with agency leaders and county counsel to investigate and mediate in cases of an alleged violation of immigrant rights in county agencies; monitor immigrant and refugee access to services; assist immigrants with language access and access to county agencies; provide support in census data collection and other outreach efforts in the many immigrant communities of Alameda County; work with community-based organizations to educate the community about county benefits, services, and changes in not only federal immigration policy but also changes in county policies and programs. This office might also assist the Board in drafting new immigrant-supporting policies responsive to changing immigration enforcement practices and programs at the federal level. The agency may also serve as a knowledge resource for immigrant and refugee community members.	Board of Supervisors	Underway
Work with Immigrant Community Leaders to Address the Need for Post-Immigration Detention Re-entry Services Toward the completion of this report, immigrant community advocate leaders reviewed the final draft of the report and informed the author of the need for re-entry services for individuals exiting immigration detention and who reside in Alameda County. The author recommends that the Board of Supervisors works with immigrant and refugee organization leaders to specify the need for re-entry services for immigration detainees and develop a plan for funding and administering the needed services.	Board of Supervisors	No
End Contracts with Companies That Assist ICE with Data Collection The county should work with Alameda County community-based organizations trying to end the contracting of cities and counties with companies that assist ICE with data collection. One such organization that does this work is Oakland Privacy. This work could guide the County in divesting from such companies and to further disentangle the county from assisting immigration enforcement through their financial agreements with these immigration-enforcement assisting companies.	Board of Supervisors	No

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Advocate with the State and Local Government for Immigrant Integration and Anti-Deportation Laws, Programs, and Benefits Alameda County should continue its work to voice its position in favor of immigrant rights, integration, and an end to immigrant detention and deportation in state and federal policy arenas. It should continue to advocate for pro-immigrant policies in the California legislature, for greater funding for immigrant integration programs and services that are not restricted by immigration or citizenship status, and for laws that reduce deportations in Alameda and throughout the country.	Board of Supervisors	Yes
Undertake a Public Messaging Campaign to Communicate Actions Taken by the County to Implement the Recommendations of this Report Increase immigrant and refugee trust in the county by communicating actions taken to implement the critical recommendations made by this report to the immigrant and refugee community.	Board of Supervisors	Yes
Consult County Counsel to explore amending Policy No: 300-1-1: Consumer Grievance and Appeal System (revision date 6/5/2018), so as to permit grievances lodged by anyone regardless of immigration status and assess whether grievance may lead to any negative immigration consequences. Amend the policy to allow for immigrants and refugees regardless of status to lodge grievances where no negative immigration consequences would result.	Behavioral Health Care Department	Yes
Amend the "Nondiscrimination Notice" (Attachment J mentioned on p.10 of the "300-1-2 NOABD P&P" document) to prohibit discrimination on the basis of immigration status or refugee status.	Behavioral Health Care Department	Yes
With counsel, review and revise the DMC ODS Member Handbook p.63, "Important Information about the State of California Medi-Cal Program," which states that an individual may qualify for Medi-Cal if they are "certain refugees, or Cuban/Haitian immigrants." The group of eligible applicants may now be broader given that full-scope Medi-Cal is now available to all youth regardless of immigration status who are under 21 years of age and limited scope Medi-Cal is available to certain undocumented immigrants.	Behavioral Health Care Department	Yes
Continue to work with immigrant advocacy organizations to create a department-specific policy to implement the provisions and prohibitions of SB54, the California Values Act, in Alameda County public hospitals and clinics.	Public Health Department	Yes
Continue to monitor and document health and social impacts of the shifting immigration policy landscape and the changes in enrollment and utilization of health programs to promote future policy work.	Public Health Department	Yes

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Create a full training for Policy 290 Immigration Issues in addition to the snapcomms videos already in use and require all new staff to enroll in the training in addition to the training provided in Contemporary Diversity.	Probation	Yes
Modify General Order 1.24 to instruct ACSO staff to respond to no ICE I-247A requests for notification of release information and to prohibit transferring any ACSO inmates to ICE custody. Statistical and criminological research shows that local jails assisting ICE by means of transferring individuals who are subsequently deported does not reduce the crime rates in cities among the general population or immigrant populations. It is an ineffective tactic for making localities safer and it can expose jails to lawsuits and costly settlements. The consequence of such transfers can be the separation of families, the collapse of household finances and housing insecurity when the main money earner is detained and deported, and a waste of staffing resources dedicated to carrying out a variety of immigration enforcement assistance activities. Alameda County can join the other Bay Area counties, including Santa Clara County, City and County of San Francisco, Marin County, Contra Costa County, and San Mateo County, which have ended their various forms of voluntary assistance to ICE.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Yes
Decline to allow ICE to interview any inmates in ACSO jails.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Yes
When ACSO receives an I-247A request to hold or transfer an inmate to ICE custody, or to provide release information to ICE, provide a copy of the request upon receiving it to the individual prior to responding to ICE.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Does not respond to I-247A requests
When ACSO receives an I-247A request or request to interview an inmate, immediately send a copy of the I-247A request and associated records to the detainee's indicated attorney regardless of whether the attorney has requested it.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Does not respond to I-247A requests
Work with the Board of Supervisors, County Counsel, and the County Administrator's Office to provide movement logs of inmates for whom ICE has issued an I-247A form in 2020 and a sample of inmates charged on similar crimes for whom ICE has not issued an I-247A form in 2020. Over the coming year of 2022, make a copy of the movement logs for each individual for which an I-247A form is received soon after the point when they are released and place these logs in a single secure digital location from where they may all be collected at the end of the year. Present the collection of movement logs to the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator's Office (CAO) for review. Demonstrate through these documents the timing of the release process and if there are instances where a prolonged detention occurs on the basis of an I-247A form, make changes to the release process so that no inmate is detained beyond the point that those inmates not subject to an I-247A form are detained and released.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Does not respond to I-247A requests

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
Consult County Counsel to amend language from General Order 1.24. IV.D.3 regarding disclosing records to ICE in response to a CPRA request to limit or prohibit disclosure where legally possible. Assess the degree to which a CPRA request from ICE for information used to enforce immigration laws may constitute a violation of the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Determined unviable
Modify General Order 1.24 section A.1., striking the word "solely" so that the provision states, "A deputy shall not initiate law enforcement action based on observations related to a subject's immigration status." Further, strike the sentence "Immigration status may, however, be reasonably relevant to the investigation of certain crimes under California Law, such as but not limited to, trafficking, smuggling, harboring, and terrorism" as the California Values Act provides no exception to allow for inquiring about immigration status to enforce these laws.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Determined unviable
Modify the following sentence in General Order 1.24, section IV.D.4 "Communication with Immigration Authorities," May 14, 2020: "The Sheriff's Office shall not extend the detention of an inmate so that ICE may detain the individual." Add to the end of this sentence "or for the purpose of notifying ICE of the release time and place of the individual."	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Does not respond to I-247A requests
Create a core curriculum, including scenarios training exercises, to train ACSO staff on General Order 1.24, and make the training materials available to the public as requestable records.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Yes
Monitor and document instances when ICE makes an arrest on ACSO property at the point of a release to the public of an individual who did not qualify for an SB54-allowed transfer or notification of release. In the ACSO's TRUTH Act forum presentation to the public that summarizes ICE access, provide additional data summarizing the total number of these additional ICE arrests of released individuals.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Determined unviable
Consult County Counsel to assess the degree to which seeking reimbursement from the federal government under the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance's SCAAP violates prohibitions of the California Values Act on sharing personal information for immigration enforcement purposes. If participation in the program consists of actual or potential violations of the information sharing provisions of the California Values Act, discontinue participation in the program. If information sharing through SCAAP does not consist of a violation, further narrow the list of eligible inmates in ACSO SCAAP application materials to those for whom the ACSO has received immigration detainers I-247A forms and who meet the other qualifying criteria rather than a full list of foreign-born inmates.	Alameda County Sheriff's Office	Yes

Recommendation	Lead	Action Taken?
When Eligibility Services Technicians (ESTs) screen applicants for Permanently Residing in the U.S. Under Color of Law (PRUCOL) eligibility, to minimize the risk to the applicant that they would be targeted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and ICE as a result of the applicant having a warrant out for their arrest, implement an additional screening question for ESTs to ask applicants if they know of any warrants out for their arrest. If the individual indicates that they do have a warrant out for their arrest, inform the individual that the USCIS may deny the application for PRUCOL because of this warrant and that ICE may subsequently target the individual for an immigration enforcement action. In the case that an applicant is denied PRUCOL, provide the individual with informational materials for immigration legal services organizations in Alameda as the denial may indicate that the individual is a priority for immigration enforcement. Monitor the number of denials of PRUCOL that SSA receives and whether any adverse immigration enforcement action results for the clients who have been denied.	Social Services Agency	No due to concerns that it would invite targeting by ICE
To increase the likelihood of clients reporting complaints of immigration status-based discrimination, add "citizenship/immigration status" to the "Basis of Discrimination" section of the list of types of complaints included on the Alameda County SSA "Client Discrimination Complaint Form." In addition to providing clients the California Health and Human Services Agency Department of Social Services pamphlet describing the complaints process, create additional materials on immigration status-based discrimination with information on how to file a complaint with the SSA, and provide it to clients along with the California Health and Human Services Agency Department of Social Services pamphlet. Work with community-based legal organizations to train employees to manage client complaints about immigration status-based discrimination and to develop a process for evaluating such complaints of discrimination as well as methods for taking corrective action to stop the discrimination when it occurs. Additionally, update the Alameda County SSA Employee Discrimination Harassment Complaint Form to also include information on immigration status or citizenship status-based discrimination. While the author has made this recommendation to the SSA here, he has included a similar recommendation to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to require all county agencies to build upon complaints process and harassment prevention materials by including citizenship and immigration status-based harassment and discrimination as a basis for complaints. Such a county-wide policy recommendation therefore was possible thanks to the SSA's extensive effort to provide public records for this review, as no other agency provided complaints process or discrimination and harassment-related client materials.	Social Services Agency	No

Appendix 2

Steering Committee Members

The OIRA Implementation Study Steering Committee is composed of philanthropic partners, District 2, core county partners, and consultants.

Akonadi Foundation

- Ray Colmenar, President, Akonadi Foundation
- Cecilia Chen, Chief Strategy Officer and Vice President of Programs, Akonadi Foundation

East Bay Community Foundation

- Autumn McDonald, Vice President of Community Investments & Partnerships, East Bay Community Foundation
- Bella Lopez, Program Officer, East Bay Community Foundation

San Francisco Foundation

- Karely Ordaz Salto, Director of CEO Affairs, San Francisco Foundation
- Eduardo (Lalo) Gonzalez, Program Officer, Power, San Francisco Foundation

Zellerbach Family Foundation

- Allison Magee, President and Executive Director, Zellerbach Family Foundation
- Navin Moul, Program Officer, Zellerbach Family Foundation

Alameda County District 2

- Elisa Márquez, Supervisor, Alameda County District 2
- Alex Boskovich, Chief of Staff, Office of Alameda County Supervisor Elisa Márquez

Alameda County County Administrator's Office

- Lori Cox, Chief Deputy County Administrator, County Administrator's Office

Alameda County Social Services Agency

- Andrea Ford, Agency Director, Social Services Agency
- Hanna Flores, Policy Director, Social Services Agency
- Charles Balderama Sanchez, Senior Management Analyst, Social Services Agency

Consultants

- Alex Desautels, LikeWater Consulting Group
- Sangita Kumar, Be the Change Consulting
- Shelley Kuang, Be the Change Consulting

Appendix 3

Peer Jurisdiction Interview Participants

Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

- Claudia Aragon, Director

San Diego County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

- Katie O'Brien, Program Specialist II

Chicago Mayor's Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights

- Jesus Del Toro, Director of Policy & Strategic Initiatives
- Beatriz Ponce de Leon, Deputy Mayor

San Francisco County Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs

- Jorge Rivas, Executive Director

Santa Clara County Office of Immigrant Relations

- Teresa Castellanos, Coordinator

NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

- Enrique Chavira, Senior Policy Advisor for Federal Immigration

Welcome Saint Paul – Immigrant & Refugee Program

- Edmundo Lijo, Assistant City Attorney

Minneapolis Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

- Michelle Rivero, Director

Orange County Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

- Jose Serrano, Director

Los Angeles County Office of Immigrant Affairs

- Daniel Sharp, Chief

Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (King County)

- Cuc Vu, Acting Director

Boston, Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA)

- Courtney White, Director of Constituent Services ; Mario Paredes, Policy Advisor

Baltimore County Immigrant Affairs Department (under County Executive)

- Giuliana Valencia-Banks, Chief of Immigrant Affairs

Appendix 4

Focus Group Process & Findings

Process

As part of the OIRA Implementation Study, each member of the Board of Supervisors was invited to nominate community members to participate in a community focus group. Participants represented a range of experiences – as immigrants themselves, as family members of immigrants, as long-time community workers, and as advocates – reflecting the breadth of communities across Alameda County’s five supervisorial districts.

Participants joined a 90-minute facilitated session in which they were invited to share their personal and professional experiences with the county’s current systems, and their hopes and dreams for an Alameda County that truly welcomes and supports immigrants so they can thrive. The session was not a policy conversation – it was a listening space, grounded in the premise that the people closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions.

What follows is a summary of what we heard.

What We Learned

Trust is the precondition for everything else.

Across every story shared, trust – or the absence of it – was the determining factor in whether a family accessed services, sought help in a crisis, or engaged with county systems at all. Fear of institutions, fear of immigration enforcement, and fear rooted in past experiences of being turned away or dismissed kept community members from reaching resources they were entitled to. Participants described the painstaking, relational work of building trust one person at a time – and the transformational results that became possible once that trust was established. An office that does not invest in trust – through community partnership, through language access, through consistent and non-threatening presence – will not reach the people who need it most.

Community organizations are the county’s most important delivery infrastructure — and they are underfunded and underrecognized.

Participants were clear and consistent: it is community-based organizations, not county agencies, that reach the families the formal system fails to reach. CBOs show up in crises. They speak the languages. They hold the relationships. They are present in the spaces – churches, food banks, school parking lots, community centers – where immigrant families already are. County programs matter, but they reach people primarily through the organizations that community members already trust. Participants asked that the county recognize this explicitly – not just in words, but in how it structures contracts, allocates resources, and shares credit.

The goal is not just stability — it is leadership and belonging.

Multiple participants described trajectories that moved far beyond crisis response: families who came in terrified and unable to navigate basic systems, who – with sustained support – became community leaders, organizers, and advocates for others. Participants consistently named this as the real measure of success: not whether someone got food assistance or accessed a legal clinic, but whether they found a

sense of belonging, developed confidence in their own voice, and became active participants in the life of their community. An office focused only on service delivery will miss this dimension entirely.

Long-term undocumented community members — especially seniors — are among the most invisible and most in need.

One of the most striking themes of the session was the situation of long-term undocumented residents who have spent decades contributing to Alameda County – working, paying taxes, raising families – but who face a structural wall when they age out of the workforce. Elderly undocumented immigrants, particularly those from countries with no viable legal pathway to status, reach their senior years with no access to Social Security, Medi-Cal, or food assistance. Participants named this with grief and anger: people who gave everything to this county, unable to live with dignity in their final years. This population rarely appears in policy conversations because they are not new arrivals and are not in acute legal crisis – but their need is profound and growing.

The county's geographic inequity is felt acutely.

Participants from South and East County described a familiar experience: services, legal clinics, and community infrastructure concentrated in Oakland and North County, with their communities – large, immigrant-dense, and deeply rooted – largely left to make do with what little is available. This was not presented as a complaint but as a practical reality that OIRA must address structurally, not just rhetorically.

People want to be seen as contributors, not just as recipients.

Running through the entire session was a theme of dignity. Participants described immigrant community members who work multiple jobs, pay into systems they cannot access, volunteer in their communities, raise children who are county residents and taxpayers, and build the local economy – and who are nonetheless treated by county systems as problems to be managed rather than people to be served. The vision participants named for OIRA was not primarily about services. It was about a county that sees its immigrant residents fully – their contributions, their complexity, and their right to thrive.

What Participants Are Asking For

Across the session, participants named a set of consistent asks for the county and for OIRA specifically. These are not policy recommendations – they are the human translation of everything else in this report:

- Be present where we already are, not just where it is convenient for the county to be.
- Build trust before you build programs.
- Fund the organizations that have been doing this work, and let them lead where they are best positioned to lead.
- See the whole person – not just the crisis they are in today, but the leader they could become.
- Do not forget the people who have been here the longest and have the least to show for it.
- Make this office real – not a symbol, not a press release, but a durable structure with real authority and real resources.

These reflections informed the CAB's recommendations throughout this report. They are included here not as data points but as the human context that gives those recommendations their meaning.

Appendix 5

Community Advisory Body Members

The OIRA Implementation Study Community Advisory Body (CAB) was composed of nine members representing both geographic and organizational diversity across Alameda County. Five members were nominated by their respective district supervisors to represent the breadth of communities and experiences across the county. Four additional members represented the county's primary rapid response coalitions – the community-based organizations that have been doing the frontline work of immigrant and refugee protection in Alameda County, often ahead of and alongside government action. Together, the CAB brought lived experience, direct service expertise, legal knowledge, systems fluency, and deep community trust to the process. Their perspectives shaped not only the recommendations in this report but the questions we knew to ask.

District Representatives

District 1 – Sara Fain is the Fremont Directing Attorney at the Immigration Institute of the Bay Area, where she leads a team of attorneys, paralegals, and administrative staff providing full-scope immigration legal services – including complex affirmative humanitarian cases, family-based immigration, and removal defense. She joined IIBA in 2017 and has spent nearly a decade serving immigrant communities across the Bay Area. She lives in the Bay Area with her husband, a naturalized U.S. citizen, and their two bilingual teenagers.

District 2 – Arzo Mehdavi is a healthcare leader and community advocate whose commitment to immigrant and refugee communities is rooted in her own lived experience as the daughter of refugees. Professionally trained as a registered nurse and healthcare operations leader, she has spent her career working within complex systems serving diverse and underserved populations. In 2021, she helped found a nonprofit that partnered with the City of Hayward to support more than 500 newly resettled Afghan refugees, including running a donation and resource center where families received food, essential goods, and community-based support. Her perspective bridges lived experience with systems-level insight.

District 3 – Richard Whipple brings 16 years of experience leading the San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs, one of the most established municipal immigrant affairs offices in the country. An Oakland resident, he has long partnered with colleagues across the Bay Area on government engagement in immigrant rights, and recently participated in the Belonging in the Bay regional convening. As a long-time member of the Steering Committee for the Cities for Action national coalition, Rich has also provided technical assistance for developing immigrant affairs offices and immigrant inclusion programming to municipalities around the country. He brings deep implementation expertise in building exactly the kind of infrastructure Alameda County is now designing.

District 4 – Yuliana Wiser-León has dedicated more than two decades to advancing the well-being and dignity of immigrant and refugee communities across the United States and Mexico. Her training spans community mental health, trauma-informed care, and immigrant legal systems navigation. Through her leadership at Eden United Church of Christ's Newcomer Navigation Center and in partnership with grassroots organizations including Padres Unidos de Cherryland, she has developed programs connecting families to legal services, education, and community support. She is a core leader of ACILEP and a strong advocate for unincorporated communities in Alameda County.

District 5 – Daniela Gonzalez serves as Engagement Director at the Multicultural Institute (MI), where her work is deeply rooted in the day labor community across Alameda County. She brings direct community connection and trusted relationships with some of the county’s most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach immigrant residents.

Alameda County’s four primary rapid response coalitions have been the operational backbone of immigrant and refugee protection in the county – mobilizing legal resources, building community awareness, coordinating mutual aid, and filling gaps that no government office has yet been positioned to fill. Each coalition contributed a representative to the CAB, ensuring that the recommendations in this report were grounded in the realities of frontline practice. Brief descriptions of each coalition and its representative follow.

ACILEP

Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership Founded in 2017, ACILEP is a partnership of Centro Legal de la Raza, the Alameda County Public Defender’s Office, and community-based organizations working to protect undocumented residents across Alameda County. ACILEP’s mission is to ensure that people facing detention, deportation, or immigration-related emergencies have access to high-quality legal services, community organizing, and resources to fight for their rights. The coalition operates a rapid response hotline, provides Know Your Rights trainings, and offers legal consultations and representation to individuals in removal proceedings. The hotline documented a 500% surge in monthly call volume in 2025, reflecting both the scale of community need and ACILEP’s role as a frontline emergency resource.

- Monique Berlanga is the Executive Director of Centro Legal de la Raza in Oakland, CA. She grew up in Hayward, CA and is a first-generation college student, receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from California State University, Hayward and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law. Monique previously served as Directing Attorney of the Tenants’ Rights Practice, leading a dedicated team of attorneys and advocates working to prevent evictions for thousands of low-income tenants in the East Bay. Monique is a member of the East Bay La Raza Lawyer’s Association and the Alameda County Bar Association. She serves on the Alameda County Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Nomination Committee.
- Maciel Jacques is the Deputy Director of Centro Legal de la Raza. She has over 20 years in the immigrant rights movement and has worked in non-profits in the East Bay for the last eight years. Maciel previously served as the Director of Immigration Legal Services at Catholic Charities of the East Bay. She has led a large team of immigration attorneys, including DOJ representatives, and other legal staff across three Bay Area offices and counties. She was also instrumental in the creation and growth of Stand Together Contra Costa, the first rapid response network for Contra Costa County. Maciel’s expertise includes removal defense, family-based immigration, asylum, U-Visas, T-Visas, DACA, unaccompanied minors services, and other immigration remedies. She has led hundreds of free community events where immigrant communities were provided with free legal application assistance, legal screenings, Know Your Rights information, family preparedness, and immigration policy updates.

ACCoRD

Alameda County Collaborative for Removal Defense ACCoRD is the removal defense arm of the California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice, focused on ensuring that immigrants facing deportation in Alameda County have access to legal representation and due process. Together with ACILEP and ACUDIR, ACCoRD is not only responding in real time to enforcement activity but actively building the infrastructure needed for a sustained, coordinated defense strategy – one grounded in trust,

lived experience, and a commitment to show up for communities at their most vulnerable moments. The County has funded ACCoRD to maintain removal defense capacity and offset the rising cost of immigration court filings.

- Lisa Knox is the Co-Executive Director and Legal Director of California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice. Lisa co-leads CCIJ, and as its Legal Director she oversees CCIJ's work creating and supporting strategies to fight for the liberation of immigrants in detention through direct representation, litigation and advocacy. Lisa has over 15 years of removal defense experience, focusing on detained immigrants. Prior to CCIJ, Lisa worked at Centro Legal de la Raza in Oakland, where she oversaw emergency legal services for ACILEP, Alameda County's rapid response network, and managed legal clinics and representation at two California detention centers. Previously, Lisa worked as a staff attorney and clinical instructor at the East Bay Community Law Center, and practiced immigration law at Van Der Hout LLP in San Francisco.

ACUDIR

Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights Led by Trabajadores Unidos Workers United, ACUDIR forms a coordinated regional network of community-based organizations, service providers, and local stakeholders that facilitates collaboration, resource sharing, and strategic planning. ACUDIR provides tools for impacted families and communities to organize in defense of immigrant rights – including building mutual aid networks, enabling coordinated resource sharing, and growing community capacity to protect residents and neighbors. The coalition brings deep roots in working-class immigrant communities across the county and has long worked to disentangle local law enforcement from deportation enforcement.

- Alejo is a first generation indigenous Zapoteca from Los Angeles, with over a decade of experience leading worker struggles to secure long-term material gains. Alejo is committed to developing rank-and-file leadership, challenging the boss, and embodying a principled stance that honors the praxis and historical legacy of proletarian struggles. She currently serves as the Executive director of Trabajadores Unidos Workers United (TUWU), where she has been building working class power since 2019.

APILO

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach Founded in 1975, Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach provides culturally competent and linguistically appropriate legal representation, social services, and advocacy for the most marginalized segments of the community, including low-income women, seniors, recent immigrants, and youth. APILO serves Alameda County residents across a range of immigration matters – including removal defense, asylum, DACA, naturalization, and U and T visas – and works closely with the Asian American Bar Association and Alameda County Health Consortium to host and staff regular immigration clinics. APILO is one of the few organizations in the county specifically designed to reach API communities in their own languages, with staff who collectively speak over a dozen languages and dialects.

- Rachel Kwak, Staff Attorney, Immigration Project at API Legal Outreach, is a proud daughter and granddaughter of Korean immigrants, who started their journey in this country in a small government subsidized apartment in Dallas, Texas. Having grown up in a low-income household most of her life, she directly witnessed how socioeconomic status impacts the access to and quality of legal services available to low income and immigrant communities. Inspired by her grandparents' tumultuous journey to citizenship and the obstacles low income undocumented folks face, she pursued a legal career to practice immigration law to provide the highest quality of legal services to the same community.

Appendix 6

Comparative Overview of 11 Peer Jurisdiction Models

Note: The final three rows (shaded) are considered supplementary context.

Component Definition	Santa Clara County	San Diego County	Orange County	City of Los Angeles	LA County	City of San Francisco	Chicago	New York City	Twin Cities	Seattle/King County	Baltimore County
Placement in Government Where office sits structurally; shapes influence, access & political exposure	County Executive / Division of Equity & Social Justice	Health & Human Services Agency (Self-Sufficiency Services)	Social Services Agency	Mayor's Office	Dept. of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA)	City Administrator's Office	Mayor's Office	Mayor's Office	Minneapolis: Neighborhood & Community Relations St. Paul: City Attorney's Office	Mayor's Office	County Executive (not yet cabinet-level)
Primary Orientation Core function / identity of the office	Contracting hub + legal ecosystem + policy	Benefits navigation + refugee services + field outreach	Lean coordination + internal education + convening	Policy & legislative advocacy + city coordination	Legal services contracting + CBO advocacy + internal training + policy	Legal services contracting + language access compliance (citywide) + policy	Legal services contracting + CBO advocacy + internal training + policy	Service access + language equity + policy coordination + funding oversight	Immigration advising + internal trainings + referral hub + legal services + CBO clinics	Legal contracting + training + language access + policy + statewide coordination	Tier 1 (funded): KYR + family preparedness. Tiers 2-3 (aspirational): hotline/triage, deportation defense, family case mgmt.
Staffing Model Team size & composition	5 staff (range: 2-8); analysts + program managers	2 Chiefs, 1 Program Specialist, 8 CHWs, analyst + support	1 Director + 1 Social Worker	1 Director + 2 analysts (sometimes partial)	9 staff (range: 3-12); CEO, COO, program managers, outreach, hotline, senior analyst	35 staff: director, program mgmt, comms, policy, language specialists + community ambassadors; staffs Immigrants Rights Commission	3 budgeted (Deputy Mayor, First Deputy Mayor, Sr. Community Liaison) + borrowed policy director & liaison + shared EA	50-60 staff: Commissioner, CoS; teams for Outreach, Constituency Services, Programs (~\$30M grants), Policy, Comms, Language Access, Intergovernmental Affairs	Minneapolis: Director + 2 community relations specialists St. Paul: Directing attorney + 0.5 city attorney + 0.5 paralegal	13 FTE (+2 planned); Director (cabinet-level), policy director + staff, community engagement staff by language group	3 FTE: Director, outreach coordinator, language access coordinator
Budget Size Approximate annual funding	\$6-8M (mostly General Fund; majority to contracts)	Mixed; primarily ORR-restricted state refugee funds + seed funds	~\$500K General Fund	~\$900K (up to \$1.5M); Mayor's discretionary	\$10-12M (large share to legal services)	\$1.8-5.2M personnel; ~\$10M legal services (+ \$3.5M one-time bump)	~\$500K (3 positions) + ~\$400K borrowed; administrators \$3M Legal Protection Fund	\$50M (office) + ~\$40M direct legal contracts + ~\$99M additional legal services advised by MOIA	Minneapolis: ~\$400K + \$1M legal services (half one-time) St. Paul: ~\$300K + \$300K legal services	\$10.6M total; \$2.5M to direct legal services	Salaries only (3 FTE); programming line item not yet established

Component Definition	Santa Clara County	San Diego County	Orange County	City of Los Angeles	LA County	City of San Francisco	Chicago	New York City	Twin Cities	Seattle/ King County	Baltimore County
Funding Sources <i>Revenue streams; affects flexibility</i>	County General Fund; occasional foundation routing	CDSS/ORR refugee funds (restricted) + one-time funds	County General Fund	Mayor's discretionary + past initiative funds	County General Fund; some CDSS funds	General Fund	Mayor's discretionary; sister agency staffing	Codified budget line item	Minneapolis: General Fund St. Paul: City attorney budget; past Vera grant funding	General Fund + Mayor's discretionary + CDBG (language access & workforce)	County Executive budget (County Council approval); no current philanthropic leverage
Legal Services Role <i>Whether office funds or administers immigration legal defense</i>	Oversees legal & rapid response contracts	Coordinates; legal defense in Public Defender's Office	Referrals only; no direct funding	Contributes to county-run legal defense fund	Administers legal services contracts	Administers legal services contracts + robust referral system	Administers legal services contracts	Administers legal services contracts	Administers contracts + organizes intake clinics + does initial triage (both directors are immigration attorneys)	Administers contracts + hosts community legal events	Aspirational; not yet funded
Community Accountability <i>Formal mechanisms for community input</i>	Monthly vendor convenings; pre-funding town halls	Developing quarterly roundtable; agency partnerships	Annual Immigration Summit; strong CBO relationships	Monthly provider meetings; direct CBO-Mayor linkage	CBO meetings + advocacy roundtables	Monthly provider meetings + weekly stakeholder meetings	CBO meetings + advocacy roundtables	Interagency coordination; coordination with NY State Office for New Americans; 30 funded partners with contractual deliverables	Biweekly virtual forum (govt + service providers); tracks current litigation	Monthly King County Immigrant & Refugee Commission meetings	Ongoing community interviews and listening sessions
Emergency Response Role <i>Role during raids, crises, or surges</i>	Funds Rapid Response Network via contracts	Direct operational coordination (mobile vans, CHWs)	Case triage + warm referrals	Funds legal defense with rapid response component	Funds legal defense with rapid response component	Funds affirmative legal services; coordinates with removal defense grant (other dept.)	Funds legal defense with rapid response component	Funds legal defense with rapid response component	Funds legal defense with rapid response component	Funds legal defense + affirmative services	KYR + standby guardianships; hotline/triage & deportation defense aspirational
Public-Facing Model <i>Physical access / one-stop model</i>	No fixed center; CBO-delivered services	Refugee Welcome Centers in gov buildings (reconsidering neutral sites)	No one-stop; uses partner spaces	Mayor's Office-based; community-focused	County office used for CBO clinics; services via partners + hotline	Physical office; services mainly via hotline or CBO partners	Mayor's Office-based; community-focused	No walk-ins (building ID required); borough-based partner access points; phone/text/email primary	CBO events + multi-service govt community hours (jobs, housing, food)	Community events with funded partners; monthly Commission meetings	No public-facing services currently

Component Definition	Santa Clara County	San Diego County	Orange County	City of Los Angeles	LA County	City of San Francisco	Chicago	New York City	Twin Cities	Seattle/ King County	Baltimore County
Funds to CBOs? <i>Does office pass grants/ contracts to community providers?</i>	Yes legal & rapid response contracts	No; legal housed in Public Defender's Office	No; connects but does not fund	Indirect (contributes to LA County Justice Fund)	Represent LA (removal defense) + Mobile Immigration Services Project	Affirmative legal services + language access + econ dev/ workforce + Dream SF grant	Legal Protection Fund (legal services + outreach)	~30 partners; must accept referrals, cover all boroughs, provide outreach/ navigation	Minneapolis: \$1M legal services St. Paul: \$300K legal services	\$2.5M direct legal services; \$750K ESL + workforce CBOs	Aspirational; not yet funded
Direct Services to Individuals <i>Does office serve residents directly?</i>	No; referral & coordination only	Yes benefits troubleshooting, CHW navigation, welcome centers	Yes intake, screening, case triage	No direct services	No; referral & coordination only	No; referral & coordination only	No; referral & coordination only	No; referral & coordination only	No; referral & coordination only	No; referral & coordination only	No; advises agencies, sets protocols, building partner model
Systems Access <i>Ability to fix eligibility/ benefits issues internally</i>	Limited (not embedded in benefits systems)	High (embedded in Self-Sufficiency Services)	Moderate (within SSA; small team)	Low (policy office)	Limited	Strong; makes warm referrals to benefits programs	Limited	Strong; makes warm referrals to benefits programs	Strong; makes warm referrals to benefits programs	Strong; makes warm referrals to benefits programs	Limited; not embedded in benefits departments

Appendix 7

Partial, Evolving List of Collaborative Spaces

The following represents a partial map of known community coordination structures operating in Alameda County. A more complete inventory is an early priority for OIRA. Several of these structures operate without formal county recognition or funding – which is both a sign of community strength and a signal that county is not always needed.

- **The Caminos Program** is a county-funded collaboration between Alameda County Health and community-based organizations including La Familia Counseling Services and Eden United Church of Christ, launched in 2013 in response to rising numbers of unaccompanied immigrant youth. The program provides case management, mental health support, health and benefit enrollment, and school-based wraparound services to unaccompanied immigrant youth and children of migrant families across multiple school districts. Alameda County has the second highest number of unaccompanied immigrant youth in California.
- **The Alameda County Collaborative for Removal Defense (ACCoRD)** is the removal defense arm of the California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice, operating as a network of legal service providers focused on ensuring that immigrants facing deportation in Alameda County have access to representation and due process. Unlike a single organization, ACCoRD functions as a coordination infrastructure – connecting attorneys, advocates, and affected community members across the county.
- **The East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum (EBRIF)** is a coalition of over 35 agencies serving refugees, asylees, and immigrants in the San Francisco East Bay. [EBRIF](#) Established in 1978 as the East Bay Refugee Forum in response to a large influx of Southeast Asian refugees, it changed its name in 2018 to reflect the breadth of its membership. [Findconnect](#) EBRIF holds quarterly convenings, maintains active workgroups, and advocates on behalf of displaced persons and immigrants at all levels of government.
- **The Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights (ACUDIR)**, led by Trabajadores Unidos Workers United, is a coordinated regional network of community-based organizations, service providers, and local stakeholders. ACUDIR provides tools for impacted families and communities to organize in defense of immigrant rights – building mutual aid networks, enabling coordinated resource sharing, and growing community capacity to protect residents and neighbors. ACUDIR has long worked to disentangle local law enforcement from deportation enforcement and brings deep roots in working-class immigrant communities across the county.
- **The Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership (ACILEP)** is a collaborative program dedicated to protecting and empowering undocumented communities across Alameda County. ACILEP provides rapid response, legal services, and community education to ensure that undocumented individuals and their families have access to justice, dignity, and the resources they need to thrive. The mission is to defend immigrants' rights, keep families together, and challenge the systemic inequities within the immigration system. ACILEP stands as a critical support network for individuals facing detention, deportation, and other immigration-related emergencies. Through their services, ACILEP responds to urgent situations in order to build long-term pathways for stability, safety, and empowerment.

- **The South County Provider Collaborative** is an informal coordination structure among service providers operating in the southern and eastern areas of Alameda County – including Fremont, Newark, Union City, and the Tri-Valley – where immigrant and refugee populations are large but services are significantly less concentrated than in Oakland and North County. The collaborative emerged from the practical need for providers in these areas to share resources, coordinate referrals, and fill gaps that no single organization can address alone.
- **The Afghan Coalition** is a Fremont-based network of service providers and community organizations that came together around 2021-22 to coordinate support for the large Afghan refugee population in the area, particularly following the surge of Afghan arrivals after the 2021 fall of Kabul. The coalition developed shared resource and referral documentation and held regular provider meetings. Though less active following the departure of a key lead, it represents a proven model of rapid, community-driven coordination around a specific population in need.
- **The Oakland Chinatown Coalition** is a coalition of service and community organizations, businesses, churches, and residents who live, work, and thrive in Oakland’s Chinatown neighborhood. [Instagram](#) The coalition’s base-building work centers on Asian immigrant communities, connecting everyday struggles around housing and economic security to a larger vision for an inclusive Oakland, and equipping community members with skills and confidence to organize and drive change. [Akonadi Foundation](#) Member organizations include Asian Health Services, Asian Immigrant Women Advocates, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Filipino Advocates for Justice, and APILO, among others.
- **The Resilient Fruitvale Collaborative** is a cross-sector initiative that advances the resilience of the Fruitvale neighborhood at the individual, organizational, and community levels, with a focus on streamlining and strengthening access to resources and expertise for local leaders ([Unity Council](#)). Formed in 2017 following the Ghost Ship warehouse fire, which took the lives of 36 community members, the collaborative was reactivated during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the community – including the Latino, Mayan, and Mam-speaking populations – could access vital health and support services ([UCLA Latino](#)). The collaborative is led by The Unity Council and includes La Clínica de la Raza, Street Level Health Project, Centro Legal de la Raza, Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, and other Fruitvale-rooted organizations.
- **The Protect the Town Task Force** was established by Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee through executive order in January 2026 to coordinate a city-wide response to immigration enforcement activity, educate residents about their rights, and work with state and regional partners to pursue legal action if needed ([NBC Bay Area](#)). The task force represents a formal city-level coordination structure that OIRA should understand and engage with as a regional partner, given the significant overlap between Oakland residents and Alameda County services.
- **The South Hayward Immigrant and Refugee Support Group** is a local coordination structure operating in the South Hayward area of District 2, one of the most densely immigrant-populated but historically under-resourced parts of the county. The group brings together service providers, faith communities, and community members to share information and coordinate response to emerging needs. It represents exactly the kind of organic, geography-specific coordination infrastructure that OIRA should resource rather than replace.
- **The Newcomer Services in Alameda County** is a collaborative by the International Rescue Committee Oakland, Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay, and Jewish Family Services

Silicon Valley that formed in response to the January 2025 federal pause on refugee resettlement. The collaborative is dedicated to family stability and continuity of services for Alameda County newcomers. They provide a range of services from case management, housing navigation, and job readiness to transportation and food access.

This list is not exhaustive. It is a starting point. Several of these structures operate without any formal county presence or funding. OIRA should approach this landscape with curiosity and humility before it approaches it with a convening agenda.

Appendix 8

Two-Year Work Plan

Priority 1: Build the Foundation for Long-Term County Integration & Community Accountability

This priority describes the infrastructure that allows it to continue advancing the shared priorities after the pilot phase ends – when the political urgency of the current moment has faded and philanthropic support has shifted. Without this priority, the others are time-limited projects. With it, they become county practice.

Year 1 – Build

- Hire Director and staff; to expedite OIRA launch, consider making a temporary assignment to make this as quick as possible
- Establish a standing Interdepartmental Coordination Table (OIRA-ICT) – where each department assigns a staff with capacity to set priorities, implement decisions, and enough departmental positioning (ideally at the level of department seconds or thirds) meeting cadence, agenda structure, and deliverable accountability to be set at launch – if a table exists, build out its authority
- Develop a policy tracking and guidance function – as federal and state policy shifts, in consultation with County Counsel, OIRA issues updated guidance simultaneously across all departments
- Refine 2-year workplan and, working with the BOS, specifically the ACT for All Committee, CAO, and Community Advisory Body, set benchmarks for assessing progress/success
- Align department planning – particularly budget and staffing – with the Office of Equity planning

Year 2 – Strengthen

- Work with the CAO and BOS to establish OIRA as a permanent line item with a multi-year budget projection, which would serve to give OIRA and partner CBOs the stability necessary for longer-range planning
- Formalize OIRA ICT, including outlining staff responsibilities for regularly updating OIRA on their department's immigrant and refugee-serving activities, as well as progress towards inter-departmental priorities
- Conduct a structured review of the pilot phase – assessing whether the pilot structure, staffing level, and placement are adequate to the mandate; recommendations from this review inform CAB guidance and BOS decisions for the transition from pilot to permanent office
- Begin planning for structural transition – whether that means expanding staffing, shifting placement, or formalizing authority; the goal is that by the end of Year 2, the Board has and is set to approve a concrete proposal for what a permanent OIRA looks like.

Priority 2: Assess Needs, Identify Vulnerabilities, and Stabilize the Ecosystem

Year 1 – Build

- Evaluate and extend existing deportation defense, emergency response, and community organizing collaboration contracts through 2028; assess gaps and bring on additional collaboratives as partners if needed/funds available
- Map the current funding base/contracts for immigrant and refugee services across the county –

federal, state, and general fund funded services – to understand what services and CBOs are most vulnerable and where flexible fund investment is most needed; work with BOS to best protect refugees and immigrants from harmful cuts to safety net services

- Update the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs report from 2021 to reflect changes to immigrant and refugee services offered by each County department
- Identify data analyst liaisons in key departments and form an “OIRA Population Data Workgroup” that works in partnership with a stipended group of community organizations on the development and release of a population status report for Alameda County’s immigrants and refugees; this report should include insights from community service providers about unmet needs
- In partnership with OIRA contractors specifically, create clear risk/needs assessment for their respective services to increase understanding and collaboratively problem solve for how to best respond to shifting needs over time
- Champion a shift to multi-year flexible support as the standard for all contract renewals – a contracting policy change the Board can authorize – as a way to build longer term resilience of the CBO infrastructure

Year 2 – Strengthen

- Release population status report and Ad Hoc Committee Report update; staff engaged in both efforts summarizes what was learned in the process and makes recommendations to BOS for standardization moving forward, including whether the OIRA Population Data Workgroup should continue as a standing or ad hoc workgroup
- Develop an annual “Immigrant and Refugee Budget” that creates a framework for tracking changes to the federal, state, and County funding levels for immigrant and refugee programs and services
- In partnership with OIRA contractors, translate initial risk/needs assessment developed in year 1 to an annual report that summarizes population needs as it relates to contractors’ scopes – including any shifts over the contracting period – contractor activities, and recommendations for shifts in funding priorities for subsequent contract terms
- Communicate to the BOS where CBO capacity is insufficient and need is documented, and when possible make recommendations for how to address, in consultation with CBOs and County coordination table

Priority 3: Build a County-Wide Hub for Resource Navigation Information and Referrals

NOTE: Given the recommended staffing structure and budget, this office should build systems that support more effective and efficient referrals and service navigation for the County’s community-based partners and community facing staff, not navigation and referral services for community members individually.

Year 1 – Build

- Map all existing County contracts related to immigrant and refugee affairs into a single multilingual resource database – contract to a trusted CBO partner to build and maintain rather than building in-house, with the existing [Newcomers Welcome](#) website as a point of departure. (Note: consider re-naming this website from Newcomers to Immigrant support, to ensure the services are not limited to newcomers, but the immigrant population in general.)
- Map and formally recognize existing rapid response and mutual aid networks
- Establish referral protocols between OIRA, CBOs, and County departments – documented, shared, and trained across partners; this task will be a significant lift for OIRA, assigned County Dept

staff, and CBO partners and the full set of related activities – such as whether or not a standing workgroup is needed – is not captured in this workplan

- In partnership with County Departments and CBOs, develop system for tracking referral data quarterly – what is requested, filled, and turned away
- Launch a pilot effort to develop one standard intake and referral platform used across immigrant and refugee facing service providers; potential to leverage the common referral platform ACCORD is already building for its members and with Immigration Institute of the Bay Area

Year 2 – Strengthen

- Roll-out new website/clearinghouse, including training, collateral, outreach
- Report referral tracking data to BOS and make recommendations for additional supports needed to meet demand
- Assess efficacy of online services database and referral protocols, make recommendations for post-pilot phase improvements as needed
- Explore multilingual AI-assisted navigation tools for alleviating demand on OIRA staff and expanding after-hours access – contract to a vendor with civic tech experience rather than building internally

Priority 4: Coordinate Implementation of Existing County-Wide Policies

Year 1 – Build

- Establish OIRA as the county’s language access and Response Plans technical assistance & accountability office – with formal mandate to require compliance, not just advise; this requires explicit Board authorization.
- Convene language access liaisons in each Department to develop a workplan that covers the following:
 - Map the language resources: 1) that are currently provided in the County, 2) provided by CBOs, 3) alignment with population needed data
 - Review each Department’s language access plans, service utilization data to date, and any trainings already completed
 - Identify training gaps and develop plan to educate county staff on the Language Access Ordinance
 - Provide technical assistance trainings and capacity building interventions for county staff to get into compliance with the ordinance
 - Ensure county-facing digital entry points are accessible in threshold languages without requiring more than 2 clicks
- Work with OIRA ICT to implement the ICE-Free Zones policy and countywide Response Plan directive, including:
 - Develop written rapid-response protocols and physical security procedures applicable to all County staff and facilities
 - Share progress towards ICE-Free Zones implementation requirements – signage, physical barriers where appropriate, and consistent procedures across all county facilities including parking areas; this should include specific partnership with the Sheriff to address the use of public release notifications by ICE to make arrests
 - Develop staff training priorities and workplan, including assessing the need for Know Your Rights and Rapid-Response plan training across all departments
 - Create a public facing communications plan, including protocols to be employed in the case of an ICE surge

- Develop written scenario plans for the most likely enforcement escalation scenarios – co-developed with community partners
- Formally connect to rapid response and mutual aid networks as vital partners in implementing the response plan

Year 2 – Strengthen

- Continue driving language access commitment implementation, including:
 - Develop a language access complaint system for community members trying to access services to be able to report gaps/violations and design an enforcement response
 - Publish an annual language access report by department – public and presented to the BOS; include in first report release recommendations for frequency and process moving forward
 - Develop system for sharing language access data with CBOs, along with associated resources and recommendations
 - Develop system for developing and refreshing a language access training plan, including ongoing compliance and technology use trainings, along with a centralized technical assistance resource
 - Develop proactive in-language outreach strategy for communities not accessing services despite documented eligibility
 - Begin designing a compliance monitoring system using a community-based audit approach – for example, modeled on the “secret shopper” approach used by community organizations in San Francisco – contracted to a trusted community partner
- OIRA ICT continues to prioritize coordination on ICE response planning, including:
 - Coordinate live sessions to practice emergency response scenario plans and incorporate any lessons learned into plan refinement, resource requests, and trainings
 - Amend existing rapid response contracts to include formal mutual aid coordination
 - Work with ACILEP to establish a real-time information-sharing protocol between OIRA, Sheriff, DA, and CBOs
 - Implement Know Your Rights and Emergency Response training to all county-facing staff as indicated by assessment
 - Evaluate rapid response contract coverage and amend sole-source agreements to close gaps in reach to underserved communities
 - Assess progress toward developing a comprehensive and effective countywide Response Plan and make recommendations for ongoing supports needed

Priority 5: Build Community Accountability, Partnership, and Transparency

Year 1 – Build

- Establish a Quarterly Community Advisory Board (CAB) through an open application process that selects for representation across service types (health, legal, school-based), geographies (cities and unincorporated communities), and populations served (e.g., refugee resettlement, unaccompanied minors, Southeast Asian and Latinx communities); CAB approves refined OIRA workplan, reviews year-1 progress, and makes recommendations for any shifts in year-2 priorities
- Develop & Implement County-led Community Collaboration Plan, to include the following:
 - Map County-led convenings of its immigrant and refugee serving contractors; establish regular technical assistance meetings for contractors as needed
 - Partner with community collaborative partners (such as ACUDIR, ACELIP, ACCoRD,

EBRIF) in initiating regularly scheduled County-wide convenings open to all immigrant and refugee serving organizations as a way to build community and strengthen the ecosystem; consider convenings diving deep on specific populations, specific geographies, etc.

- Map existing community-led collaboratives and prioritize OIRA participation/partnership based on community needs
- Map key community collaboratives across critical functions – emergency response, deportation defense, organizing – and geographies, develop plan for building capacity of collaboratives most poised to serve as community-owned accountability structures post-pilot
- Pilot changes to county contracts that give contractors more flexibility to participate in collaborative efforts
- Set-up a structure for public-private partnership for OIRA to be able to receive and redistribute funds to CBOs, including community power-building and coalitions

Year 2 – Strengthen

- Continue CAB quarterly meetings, expanding focus from tracking updates, advising on shifting priorities, and monitoring progress to include making recommendations for a durable long-term accountability plan that centers community autonomy post-pilot phase
- CAB review and advise on OIRA recommendations on all aspects of the office structure, function, priorities, and budget post-pilot phase before they go to the BOS at the end of the 2-year pilot
- Celebrate CAB service and formally close; Support shift to new accountability approach post-pilot phase
- Continue implementing Community Collaboration Plan, to include recommendations on what to sustain post-pilot phase:
 - Continue contractor convenings and all-County convenings
 - Continue partnering with community collaboratives on county-wide convenings
 - Continue OIRA engagement in community-driven spaces adjust as needed
- Based on Year 1 pilot feedback with County contractors, refine and expand community collaboration support language to all applicable County contracts for immigrant and refugee services; establish activity tracking mechanism to continue to understand community-driven collaboration dynamics with an eye toward building capacity of CBOs to engage in community driven (vs funder driven) collaboration and coalition spaces
- Develop a sustainability plan – including private funding sources – to support community-owned collaborative spaces in fully realizing their potential to serve as a durable long-term accountability structures for OIRA that centers community autonomy
- Engage in philanthropic fundraising to support CBO engagement in collaborative spaces
- Develop communications plan, including resource needs, for proactive public communication on OIRA-specific and broader County activities related to immigrants and refugees; identify ongoing resource needed

Implementation Note: As soon as staff are in place, one of the first tasks is to revisit and reorder these recommended priorities to align with changes in the socio-political context. Any substantive changes would need to be endorsed by the pilot-phase Community Advisory Board and BOS.

Appendix 9: Social Services Agency Addendum



Andrea Ford
Agency Director

July 30, 2026

TO: Each Member, Board of Supervisors
CC: Susan Muranishi, County Administrator
FROM: Andrea Ford, Director, Alameda County Social Services Agency
RE: Interim Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) - **Updated**

This memo provides the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator with an update on the activities of the Interim Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA).

I. Background

Alameda County's coordinated response to changing federal immigration and refugee policy began in January 2025. Following a January 20, 2025 federal Executive Order that suspended refugee resettlement grant funding nationwide, threatening resettlement agencies' ability to serve recently arrived refugees. In response, the Board of Supervisors, on January 24, 2025, approved creation of the "[Alameda County Together for All](#)" Ad Hoc Committee to coordinate the County's response to anticipated federal policies and budgets affecting vulnerable populations. Modeled on the **2017 Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights led by the late Supervisors Wilma Chan and Richard Valle**, the Committee convened informational meetings across districts and advanced policy and funding recommendations that helped lay the groundwork for OIRA.

On February 4, 2025, the Board approved [emergency contracts](#) totaling **\$876,500 with three refugee resettlement agencies** – the International Rescue Committee, Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay, and Jewish Family Services Silicon Valley – to sustain reception and placement services, including housing, transportation, employment, and case management, for more than 270 recently arrived refugees. Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA) led the County's response and administered these one-time emergency stabilization funds.

On March 11, 2025, the Board approved an additional [\\$3.5 million investment](#) in immigrant and refugee communities, including \$1.3 million for the **Public Defender's Immigration Unit** to provide legal defense for noncitizens. The remaining \$2.2 million supported three community-based contracts for due process legal services (**Alameda County Collaborative for Removal Defense** known as ACCoRD led by the California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice); Rapid Response Hotline, Know Your Rights trainings, and pre-emptive legal services and community volunteer network response coordination (**Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education**

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Partnership known as ACILEP led by Centro Legal de la Raza); and, provide resources and preparation to Immigrant and Refugee communities, including training, mutual aid and neighborhood resources (**Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights** or ACUDIR led by Trabajadores Unidos Workers United). The ACSSA's Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration (WBA) administered the contracts until they transitioned to the Interim OIRA in June 2026.

In October 2025, ACSSA presented a concept proposal to the Board to establish an Interim OIRA, responding to the needs of Alameda County's approximately 563,000 immigrant residents (34% of the county's population). The Board approved **\$450,000 to support [Interim OIRA staffing](#)**. Concurrently, Supervisor Márquez engaged philanthropy to commission an **OIRA implementation study with regular input and support from ACSSA and the County Administrator's Office**.

In December 2025, the Board **affirmed its commitment to [language access](#)** by directing the County Administrator's Office to compile a language access utilization report, including recommendations to improve employee and community awareness of language access services countywide.

The implementation study began in January 2026 and concluded with a [report](#) to the ACT for All Ad Hoc Committee on April 30, 2026. The **Zellerbach Family Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, Akonadi Foundation, and East Bay Community Foundation** contributed a total of \$185,000 to fund the independent study, which charted the office's development and ongoing structure.

The Board also took steps during this period to reinforce policies supporting immigrant and refugee communities. **In January 2026, the Board unanimously passed ACSSA's [coordinated countywide strategy](#) to protect immigrant communities through rapid response protocols, safeguarding access to public services, and formally establishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)-Free Zones** on County property. On July 8, 2026, the County Administrator issued employee guidelines establishing a coordinated countywide protocol for responding to immigration enforcement activity at County facilities, outlining staff responsibilities, legal parameters, and communication procedures to ensure consistent, lawful, and safety-focused responses.

Taken together, these actions reflect Alameda County's coordinated effort to expand immigrant inclusion, advance language access, and establish the foundational infrastructure for OIRA to serve the County's immigrant and refugee residents.

II. Staffing Update

Since October 2025, ACSSA has **advanced recruitment for three positions** supporting the Interim OIRA:

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- Interim Senior Management Analyst (MA): Recruited and interviewed in April 2026; the selected candidate began work on May 4, 2026.
- Interim Management Analyst (MA): In late May 2026, ACSSA began reclassifying an existing vacant position for this role. It is expected to be posted mid- to late-July 2026, with hiring anticipated shortly after.
- Interim OIRA Director: Recruitment was initiated in early June 2026. ACSSA has begun establishing the recruitment process, which is expected to take, at a minimum, up to six weeks. ACSSA has not yet decided on the reporting structure for the role.

III. Emergency and Transition Support Service Contracts & Upcoming Request for Proposal (RFP) Status

In June 2026, ACSSA transitioned the three existing community-based contracts for rapid response, legal services, and community engagement support to the Interim OIRA. **The Interim Senior MA has since reviewed all associated contracts, performance metrics, finances, and quarterly reports, and developed a standard data collection template to bring consistency to reporting across providers.** Meetings with all three contractors to review progress and challenges occurred in early July 2026.

The outstanding contract balances for each provider as of the end of July 2026 are as follows:

Contractor	Services	Total Contract Amount	Remaining Funds	% Remaining
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (on behalf of Alameda County Collaborative for Removal Defense [ACCoRD])	Legal aid, including due process services and deportation defense	\$2,045,193	\$519,925	25.4%
Centro Legal de la Raza (on behalf of Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership [ACILEP])	Rapid response hotline, community outreach and education, legal aid and other wraparound services	\$2,687,969	\$2,073,994	77.2%
Trabajadores Unidos Workers United (on behalf of Alameda County United In Defense of Immigrant Rights [ACUDIR])	Community engagement, preparedness training, and mutual aid	\$1,014,375	\$184,362	18.2%

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The **Interim OIRA will identify a Board date in September to submit contract amendments** following meetings with the three existing community-based providers and development of a spending plan.

Separately, ACSSA has begun the process of a new, competitively bid RFP for these services. ACSSA has engaged its internal Contracts Unit and the General Services Agency (GSA) and is developing a comprehensive statement of work (SOW). **ACSSA began the formal work with GSA the third week of July 2026. GSA has indicated the RFP process can take a minimum of four months to reach publication.** The intent of the new RFP is to **modernize service offerings** — rather than renew existing SOW as-is — and to ensure the resulting contracts serve all impacted ethnic populations across Alameda County.

IV. Additional Activities

Since October 2025, the Interim OIRA has advanced several efforts beyond staffing and contracts. In early June 2026, ACSSA launched a **contracts and services analysis and population needs assessment**, compiling an **inventory of contracted and County-administered services** to inform a future navigation database.

ACSSA also served on the **OIRA Implementation Study Steering Committee**, alongside the County Administrator's Office, Supervisor Márquez's office, and the philanthropic funders. Following Supervisor Márquez's November 7, 2025 funding request to the Zellerbach Family Foundation and the subsequent transmittal of the OIRA Implementation Study proposal to ACSSA on December 1, 2025, the Steering Committee oversaw development of the study's scope of work, selection of the consultant team (Be the Change Consulting and LikeWater Consulting), and approval of the Community Advisory Body. **ACSSA Steering Committee representatives provided insight, coordination, and synthesis through the completion of the final report. The Interim OIRA hosted by ACSSA has also accomplished many early pilot milestones, including:**

- Developed a charter for a proposed **Interdepartmental Coordination Table**, comprised of County agencies and departments responsible for implementing related policies, and sharing program data.
- Distributed the **contract/program data request and charter to County agencies and departments** the week of July 26, 2026.
- Launched a dedicated **Interim OIRA [webpage](#)** and a **public-facing email address oir@acgov.org** to improve community access to information and direct inquiries to the office.
- Implemented a **policy tracker and news roundup** covering May and June 2026 to monitor developments affecting immigrant and refugee communities.

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- Presented on its vision and mission at the **World Refugee and Immigrant Day event** on June 13, 2026 (THINK Academy, Oakland) and at the **Alameda County Health's Federal Immigrant and Refugee Health workgroup** on July 16, 2026.
- Represents Alameda County at the **regional "Belonging in the Bay" convenings**, which coordinates a regional response to federal immigration enforcement.

In July 2026, ACSSA assumed a **formal coordinating role under the newly issued countywide employee guidelines**, serving as the lead agency for tracking immigration enforcement activity, supporting interagency communication, and connecting impacted departments with appropriate community partners and resources.

ACSSA has **supported implementation of ICE-Free Zones** by designing standardized signage that private property owners and leaseholders can voluntarily request to restrict civil immigration enforcement activity on nonpublic property, and by preparing language for public distribution through the OIRA webpage.

V. Next Steps

Looking ahead, ACSSA will **post the Interim OIRA Management Analyst position in late July 2026** and continue the Interim OIRA Director recruitment, with completion expected within four to six weeks of its early June 2026 start. ACSSA will also distribute the **Interdepartmental Coordination Table charter and data request to departments by July 31, 2026**.

ACSSA met with the rapid response, legal services, and community engagement contractors in early July 2026 to review progress, challenges, and spending plans. **On July 16, 2026, the ACT Ad Hoc Committee received presentations from each of the three contractors on their accomplishments as well as a status update on the County Readiness Plan and ICE-Free Zones initiative, and state and national immigration trends.** Staff from the Interim OIRA attended the July 28, 2026, Board of Supervisors' Work Session featuring a **presentation on the OIRA Implementation Study** funded by philanthropy, which will help inform ongoing alignment of countywide immigrant protection activities with broader regional developments.

Following those meetings, **the Interim OIRA will return to the Board with a target date for rapid response, legal services, community engagement contract amendments, anticipated in September 2026.** Staff will also continue developing the SOW with GSA toward RFP publication, with formal engagement beginning the third week of July 2026 and a publication timeline of a minimum of four months. The Interim OIRA will continue maintaining the policy tracker and news roundup on an ongoing basis to keep the Board and community partners informed of relevant developments.

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VI. Conclusion

ACSSA and the Interim OIRA remain focused on **strengthening countywide coordination, enhancing service readiness, and supporting immigrant and refugee residents through sustained policy development, strategic partnerships, and responsive program implementation**. We will continue to keep the Board and County Administrator informed as key milestones are reached and as the Interim OIRA advances toward full establishment.

We appreciate the Board's and County Administrator's continued support of this work and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions or provide additional details.

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Appendix 10: A Decade of Commitment

Movements are made of moments — and moments are made by people.

The timeline on the following page traces ten years of deliberate, documented action by Alameda County to uphold its commitment to immigrant and refugee communities. From Supervisor Wilma Chan's founding resolution in 2016 to the ICE-Free Zones ordinance passed unanimously by the Board of Supervisors in January 2026, each entry reflects a choice made by specific people – elected officials, county staff, community advocates, and focus group participants – to put their names and their offices behind something that mattered.

This history matters for one reason: ACOIRA is not a new idea born of crisis. It is the fulfillment of a covenant the County made with itself, and reaffirmed at every turn. The political will documented here is real. The community infrastructure built alongside it is real. What this report recommends is not a leap into the unknown – it is the next deliberate step on a road that has already been walked, by many people, for a long time.

The source documents behind each milestone are publicly available and linked throughout this report. They are included here not as footnotes, but as evidence: of continuity, of intention, and of the kind of steady, unglamorous, consequential work that makes durable change possible.

A series of board commitments culminated toward a \$7.5 million allocation in 2025 ([Feb](#), [March](#), [April](#) & [October](#); [ACT for All](#)).

September 2016

[Resolution Designating Alameda County a Welcoming County for Immigrants and Refugees by the late District 3 Supervisor Wilma Chan](#)

December 2016

[Creation of the Ad Hoc Committee to work on supporting immigrant & refugee communities by the late Supervisor Chan & and past Board President/retired Supervisor Scott Haggerty](#); this would become the Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant & Refugee Rights led by the late Supervisors Chan and Valle.

December 2021

[Ad Hoc Committee on Immigrant & Refugee Rights' final report](#) provides a roadmap for ongoing support and progress, reaffirming the County's steadfast dedication to uplifting all residents, regardless of their background. Of the 10 final recommendations includes the creation of an Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (#6)

December 2024

[The Public Protection Committee reignites the call to protect noncitizen residents in Alameda County in partnership with the Public Defender's Office.](#)

January 2025

[Renewed Urgency: Creation of Alameda County Together For All or ACT Ad Hoc Committee.](#)

February 2025

Following a January 2025 federal executive order that paused refugee resettlement, the Board of Supervisors approved \$876,500 to provide emergency relief to three refugee services organizations. International Rescue Committee (IRC), Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS) – East Bay, and Jewish Family Services (JFS) – Silicon Valley to support refugee households in Alameda County with immediate housing, transportation, employment, and case management services.

August 2025

OIRA Recommendation Reaffirmed at ACT Committee

October 2025

Board authorizes pilot budget of \$450K from Measure W to support OIRA planning within SSA

December 2025

Supervisors Tam & Márquez bring forth a board letter that was approved to reaffirm the County's commitment to equitable language access regardless of immigration status.

January 2026

ACT Committee Chair Supervisor Bas receives approval from BOS to implement a Countywide Immigration Enforcement Response Plan and County Policy Establishing "ICE-Free Zones".