

# INNOVATION PROJECT STAFF ANALYSIS: Pacific Islander Innovative Project (PIIP)

## San Francisco County

**Total INN Funding Requested:** \$1,800,000

**Duration of INN Project:** 3 years

### Review History

**Public Comment Period:** December 2, 2025 to January 2, 2026

**Behavioral Health Board Hearing:** January 15, 2026

**Board of Supervisors Approval:** Tentatively May

### Project Introduction

The City and County of San Francisco (SF/County) is requesting up to \$1,800,000 of Innovation spending authority over a period of three (3) years to explore and address the behavioral health needs of Pacific Islanders in the context of community violence using a family-centered and culturally informed approach. With a heavy focus on traditional Pacific Islander values and linguistically appropriate services, which are often overlooked and underfunded in this community, this project will implement community violence interventions through services and referrals to behavioral health resources for victims, survivors, families of violence, and adults who are released from incarceration.

### BHSA Alignment and Sustainability

The Pacific Islander Innovative Project (PIIP) directly aligns with the goals of the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) by providing early intervention mental health supports to Pacific Islander victims, survivors, and families in crisis due to community violence in San Francisco. It also provides housing support as these individuals are rapidly rehoused to protect their safety and prevent acts of violent retaliation. This includes supports to Pacific Islander men and women who are exiting out of the State prison system and reentering their community. Upon completion of this project, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) Behavioral Health Services (BHS) division may fund sustainability of successful elements of the project, which potentially includes mental health supports, post-incident aftercare and referrals, support groups, and Pacific Islander therapists.

### Statutory Requirements

**WIC Section 5830(a)(1)-(4):** This project seeks to promote interagency and community collaboration related to mental health services, supports, or outcomes.

**WIC Section 5830(b)(2)(A)-(D):** This project meets Innovation criteria by introducing a new practice or approach to the overall mental health system, including, but not limited to, prevention and early intervention; and by applying a promising community driven practice or approach that has been successful in a non-mental health context or setting.

## Background

Pacific Islanders in San Francisco experience high exposure to trauma, violence, substance use, and justice system involvement, yet they remain severely underserved in behavioral health systems. Their needs are often hidden because public agencies routinely combine Pacific Islander data with larger Asian populations, masking the community’s distinct mental health challenges. As a result, there is almost no research or data on Pacific Islander mental health in San Francisco, especially related to community violence.

The US Center for Disease Control defines community violence as “intentional, interpersonal acts of violence between unrelated individuals, often acquaintances or strangers, primarily in public spaces outside the home. Examples include gun violence, gang-related disputes, physical assaults, stabbings and robbery.” One recommendation to break the cycle of violence and support people at highest risk is through community violence intervention (CVI) programs, which are localized, culturally informed strategies aimed at reducing serious physical and psychological harm.

This project brings together key Pacific Islander–serving organizations that provide violence prevention, intervention, and reentry support, as well as connect families to essential resources. The PIIP will examine how these organizations’ efforts around violence interruption, behavioral health support groups, rapid rehousing, culturally aligned clinical referrals, and reentry planning for incarcerated Pacific Islanders can help families heal from the trauma of community violence.

## How this Innovative Project Addresses the Problem

The PIIP is built on core cultural principles of ‘ohana, tautua, alofa, fa’aaloalo, and faka-Tonga; these translate respectively to family, service, love, respect, and spirituality in different languages of the Pacific Islands. This project will be implemented in collaboration with four (4) culturally based organizations, identified below.

**SALT Association:** The South Pacific Islanders, All Islands Gatherings as 1, Living in Peace, and Tongans Rise Up Association is a consortium of Pacific Islander-serving organizations that perform violence prevention, mediation, and intervention services.

**SCDC:** Samoan Community Development Center supports San Francisco’s Pacific Islander migrants and provides services to Pacific Islander children, youth, adults, and elders.

**Pacific Islander Resource Hut:** The Hut is a community hub that offers connections to services and resources, such as employment training.

**PICD:** The Pacific Islander Cultural District combats the decline of the Pacific Islander population and fosters cultural belonging while promoting economic development.

The PIIP will deliver community violence interventions, behavioral health supports, rapid rehousing, culturally grounded support groups, therapy referrals, and reentry planning for formerly incarcerated Pacific Islanders. The project will also evaluate how these services improve the mental health of Pacific Islander families affected by violence. This project will offer six (6) levels of care:

1. **Immediate crisis response** at the scene of a violent incident, providing emotional support to victims and families.
2. **Hospital-based support** for families whose loved ones are receiving emergency care.
3. **Aftercare home visits**, where staff will help families understand medical, legal, and social service systems, and offer spiritual or practical support, such as connections to pastors or assistance with funeral planning.
4. **Referrals to therapy** through the SCDC or the Department of Public Health for those seeking clinical care.
5. **Culturally safe support groups**, which include eight (8)-week sessions held four (4) times a year for youth, adults, and elders, facilitated by Pacific Islander therapists.
6. **Mental health care for PIIP staff**, ensuring long-term emotional sustainability for those doing intensive violence intervention work.

## Community Planning Process

The PIIP was developed with extensive community consultations led by the SALT Association, which identified a major lack of culturally grounded behavioral health services for Pacific Islanders. Community planning efforts included insight from youth, adults, and elders representing the Pacific Islander population, who emphasized the need for support that addressed community violence, mental health services delivered by Pacific Islander therapists, rapid rehousing for families at risk of retaliation, and guidance for incarcerated Pacific Islanders preparing to reenter their communities.

The public comment period for this Innovative project proposal occurred between December 2, 2025 and January 2, 2026. It was presented at a local behavioral health board hearing on January 15, 2026, and Board of Supervisors review is expected in late May.

## Learning Objectives and Evaluation

The analysis and evaluation for the PIIP will be performed by an external evaluator, who will perform the following activities:

- Establish a baseline of the mental health of Pacific Islander families in San Francisco.
- Understand the mental health state of Pacific Islander families who have been impacted by community violence.
- Learn how PIIP services of mental health support, referrals to mental health services and community support groups, rapid rehousing, linkages to services and resources, and exit planning assistance help the mental health of San Francisco Pacific Islander families.
- Select instruments to collect data and measure project strategies.
- Track, monitor, analyze, and report on data and findings.
- Integrate findings into PIIP Learning Report to SFDPH and the Commission.

The PIIP also seeks to answer the following questions:

- (1) What is the current mental health state of San Francisco Pacific Islander families?
- (2) What is the current mental health state of San Francisco Pacific Islander families who have been affected by community violence?
- (3) How do we measure if current Pacific Islander culture-informed community violence intervention strategies are helping the mental health of victims, survivors, and their families?

## Budget

San Francisco County is requesting authorization to spend up to \$1,800,000 of MHTA Innovation funding for this project over a period of three (3) years. One hundred percent (100%) of the project will be supported by Innovation funding. The breakdown by fiscal year and expenditure category is as follows:

| Category          | Year 1 (6/1/26 - 5/31/27) | Year 2 (6/1/27 - 5/31/28) | Year 3 (6/1/28 - 5/31/29) | Total       |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Personnel</b>  | \$460,000                 | \$460,000                 | \$460,000                 | \$1,380,000 |
| <b>Operations</b> | \$30,000                  | \$30,000                  | \$30,000                  | \$90,000    |
| <b>Contracts</b>  | \$58,000                  | \$58,000                  | \$58,000                  | \$174,000   |
| <b>Other</b>      | \$52,000                  | \$52,000                  | \$52,000                  | \$156,000   |
| <b>Total</b>      | \$600,000                 | \$600,000                 | \$600,000                 | \$1,800,000 |

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of total projected expenditures are allocated for personnel costs. This includes a designated PIIP implementation team of 4.9 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) members to provide community violence intervention and mental health services and a 0.5 FTE evaluator. The County’s current BHTA Program Manager will also provide support with project management, technical assistance, and oversight of workflows, contracting, and progress reporting.

Five percent (5%) of the proposed budget will go toward operations. This includes costs of ongoing office supplies, program supplies, travel, and mileage. It also covers the cost of reentry expenses for individuals participating in the project's rapid rehousing process, such as food, bedding, toiletries, and other emergency items required for these folks to get back on their feet.

Ten percent (10%) of the requested Innovation funds are reserved for contractor and consultant costs involving San Francisco's Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, which holds a standing contract with the Pacific Islander Cultural District. The Pacific Islander Cultural District is a network of organizations that serve the Pacific Islander community. Contracted work will also include project evaluation. The PIIP team will identify and select culturally congruent professional evaluators who understand the complexities of community violence intervention work and behavioral health supports. Therapists for the PIIP implementation team will also be provided to prevent staff burnout and ensure clinicians' mental wellness as the team helps clients through intense trauma related to community violence.

The remaining nine percent (9%) of project funds will go toward other costs including purchases of hospitality items (i.e., food and beverage) for support groups and incentives for participation in program activities.

## **Conclusion**

San Francisco County's proposed Pacific Islander Innovative Project appears to meet the minimum requirements listed under MHSa Innovation regulations and aligns with the goals of the BHSA.