



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
**COMMISSION ON HIV**



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*Join us in developing a progressive and inclusive agenda to address the disproportionate impact of HIV/STDs in our Black communities*

# BLACK CAUCUS

## Virtual Meeting

**Thursday, August 15, 2024**  
**4:00PM-5:00PM (PST)**

Agenda and meeting materials will be posted on <http://hiv.lacounty.gov/Meetings> \*Other Meetings

REGISTRATION NOT REQUIRED + SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION IN SPANISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES NOW AVAILABLE VIA CLOSED CAPTION FEATURE WHEN JOINING VIA WEBEX. CLICK [HERE](#) FOR MORE INFO.

TO VIEW THE BLACK CAUCUS' RECOMMENDATIONS, CLICK [HERE](#)

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<https://lacountyboardofsupervisors.webex.com/lacountyboardofsupervisors/j.php?MTID=mcba0b10fe7fdbf1798daf3da5c5bee2a>

### TO JOIN BY PHONE:

1-213-306-3065 Access Code/Event #: 2531 321 1412

Meeting Password: BLACK

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# together.

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
**COMMISSION ON HIV**



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# BLACK CAUCUS

## Virtual Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 15, 2024 @ 4:00PM-5:00PM

To Join by Computer:

<https://lacountyboardofsupervisors.webex.com/lacountyboardofsupervisors/j.php?MTID=mcba0b10fe7fdbf1798daf3da5c5bee2a>

Join by phone: 1-213-306-3065

Password: BLACK Access code: 2531 321 1412

- |    |  |               |
|----|--|---------------|
| 1. | WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & MEETING GUIDELINES  | 4:00PM-4:05PM |
| 2. | COH STAFF REPORT/UPDATES   | 4:05PM-4:10PM |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Operational/County Updates</li></ul>   |               |
| 3. | CO-CHAIR REPORT  | 4:10PM-4:20PM |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2024 Workplan Development   ONGOING</li><li>8/11/24 Black Immigrant Community Listening Session   FEEDBACK &amp; NEXT STEPS</li></ul>  |               |
| 4. | UPDATES & DISCUSSION   | 4:20PM-4:50PM |
|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community Listening Session Schedule &amp; Planning<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Same Gender Loving Men (September)</li><li>Women (October)</li><li>Non-Traditional HIV Providers (November)</li></ul></li><li>Community Engagement Events/ Activities<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2024 Taste of Soul (October 19)</li><li>2024 World AIDS Day (December 6)</li></ul></li></ul> |               |
| 5. | RECAP AND NEXT STEPS   | 4:50PM-4:55PM |
| 6. | PUBLIC COMMENT & ANNOUNCEMENTS   | 4:55PM-5:00PM |
| 7. | ADJOURNMENT  | 5:00PM        |

TO VIEW THE BLACK CAUCUS' RECOMMENDATIONS, CLICK [HERE](#)



## CODE OF CONDUCT

The Commission on HIV welcomes commissioners, guests, and the public into a space where people of all opinions and backgrounds are able to contribute. In this space, we challenge ourselves to be self-reflective and committed to an ongoing understanding of each other and the complex intersectionality of the lives we live. We create a safe environment where we celebrate differences while striving for consensus in the fights against our common enemies: HIV and STDs. We build trust in each other by having honest, respectful, and productive conversations. As a result, the Commission has adopted and is consistently committed to implementing the following guidelines for Commission, committee, and associated meetings.

**All participants and stakeholders should adhere to the following:**

- 1) We approach all our interactions with compassion, respect, and transparency.**
- 2) We respect others' time by starting and ending meetings on time, being punctual, and staying present.**
- 3) We listen with intent, avoid interrupting others, and elevate each other's voices.**
- 4) We encourage all to bring forth ideas for discussion, community planning, and consensus.**
- 5) We focus on the issue, not the person raising the issue.**
- 6) Be flexible, open-minded, and solution-focused.**
- 7) We give and accept respectful and constructive feedback.**
- 8) We keep all issues on the table (no "hidden agendas"), avoid monopolizing discussions and minimize side conversations.**
- 9) We have no place in our deliberations for racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, and other discriminatory statements, and "-isms" including misogyny, ableism, and ageism.**
- 10) We give ourselves permission to learn from our mistakes.**

In response to violation of the Code of Conduct which results in meeting disruption, Include provisions of SB 1100 which states in part, ". . . authorize the presiding member of the legislative body conducting a meeting or their designee to remove, or cause the removal of, an individual for disrupting the meeting . . . . Removal to be preceded by a warning to the individual by the presiding member of the legislative body or their designee that the individual's behavior is disrupting the meeting and that the individual's failure to cease their behavior may result in their removal." Complaints related to internal Commission matters such as alleged violation of the Code of Conduct or other disputes among members are addressed and resolved in adherence to Policy/Procedure #08.3302." (Commission Bylaws, Article VII, Section 4.)



# Black Caucus Workplan 2024

**PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:** To identify activities and priorities the Black Caucus will lead and advance throughout 2024.

**CRITERIA:** Select activities that 1) represent the core functions of the COH and Caucus, 2) advance the goals of the 2022-2026 Comprehensive HIV Plan (CHP), 3) identify strategies to address the Black/AA Community Task Force Recommendations, and 4) align with COH staff and member capacities and time commitment.

**CAUCUS RESPONSIBILITIES:** 1) Facilitate dialogue among caucus members, 2) develop caucus voice at the Commission and in the community, 3) provide the caucus perspective on various Commission issues, and 4) cultivate leadership within the caucus membership and consumer community.

#	GOAL/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TIMELINE/ DUE DATE	ACTION ITEMS+NEXTSTEPS+FOLLOWUP
1	<b>Organizational Capacity Needs Assessment for Black-led Organizations</b>	Administer a qualitative and quantitative needs assessment to the nine selected, Black-led organizations to help inform and implement a TA program so that Black-led organizations can better compete for County contracts.	2024	Final Report presented by EIS @ March 21, 2024 Caucus meeting.  DHSP reported on July 18 Caucus meeting they will reach out to organizations who did not participate in the survey & KII to assess interest in participating in a focus group; timeline pending.
2	<b>Community listening sessions to address the state of HIV in the Black community</b>	Hold candid community conversations by Black folx, for Black folx, addressing stigma and its relation to the faith-based community	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>● Faith based session completed (4/26)</del></li> <li><del>● Non-US Born Immigrant/Caribbean session completed (8/11)</del></li> <li>● Same Gender Loving Men=September</li> <li>● Women = October</li> <li>● Non-Traditional HIV Providers = November</li> </ul>

#	GOAL/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TIMELINE/ DUE DATE	ACTION ITEMS+NEXTSTEPS+FOLLOWUP
3	<b>National Black/AA HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD)</b>	Plan activity(ies) promoting health/wellness, lifting the Black community, and addressing stigma and the disproportionate impact of HIV within the Black community	February 2024	<del>Highlight Community Listening Sessions, with focus on faith-based session as a kick-off.</del>
4	<b>Next steps &amp; future of the Black/AA Community Task Force Recommendations</b>	Review recommendations for revisions/updates and determine next steps.	2024	Add a demographic section for those who are incarcerated, ultimately addressing the industrial prison complex.
5	<b>Community Engagement and Communications</b>	<p>Efforts around active recruitment, social media engagement, amplifying other Black HIV-centered communications (ex. A Black women’s focus during NGWHAAD, Black men’s focus during National Gay Men’s Awareness Day (NGMHAAD, etc.), and World AIDS Day (WAD).</p> <p>Communications to serve recruitment and retention. Ex. What does recruitment look like? Do we want at least one representative from Black-led, Black-serving orgs? What are the members’ responsibilities?</p>		<p>Better amplify the Caucus’s work through strategic communications. This would also look at effective delegation and engagement, getting more folks active in the room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Listening Sessions (in process)</li> <li>• Taste of Soul Participation (in process)</li> <li>• World AIDS Day community event (in process)</li> </ul>



## STANDING COMMITTEES AND CAUCUSES REPORT | KEY TAKEAWAYS | AUGUST 8, 2024

### 1. Operations

Link to the July 25, 2024 meeting packet can be found [HERE](#).

#### Key outcomes/results from the meeting:

- Executive Director, Cheryl Barrit, informed the Committee the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) will provide their report of their recommendations from their technical assistance (TA) visit by the middle of August.
- HRSA is open to presenting their TA recommendations to the full body but will require that the COH review their report and come up with specific questions in advance of the presentation. Due to the topics already scheduled for the COH meetings, we may need to schedule the HRSA presentation in December (if the meeting is not cancelled) or in early 2025.
- The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed updates to the Bylaws. A brief summary of the primary changes are as follows: (1) clarification of the role of HRSA's role in the bylaws review (HRSA will review but approval from the Project Officer is not required); (2) Membership composition changed from 51 to 50 voting members (1 non-voting member, DHSP), (3) term limits and member rotations; and (4) DHSP's roles and responsibilities as a non-voting member.
- With respect to the Bylaws, the Committee discussed HRSA's feedback regarding the Commission's overall composition and the opportunity to potentially downsize to enhance active participation and increase effectiveness in the planning process with a smaller body.
- The Committee engaged in a robust discussion regarding increased compensation for unaffiliated consumers. By consensus, the Committee agreed upon \$500 per month based on levels of participation. It was expressed that an increase will meaningfully recognize the contributions of unaffiliated consumers and allow for more opportunities to participate in various Commission activities. The Consumer Caucus was invited to attend the Operations meeting to provide input from a consumer's perspective.

#### Action needed from full body:

- Attend the next Operations Committee meeting on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 10 AM to 12 PM, to provide feedback on the Bylaws and increased consumer compensation discussions, and to hear updates regarding the Committee's outreach and engagement efforts (Outreach team and elevator pitch).
- The next training, Policy Priorities and Legislative Docket Development Process, is scheduled for October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3-4:30 PM.



## 2. Executive

Link to the July 25, 2024 meeting packet: [HERE](#)

### Key outcomes/results from the meeting:

- The Committee reviewed the updated COH Meeting Schedule for the remainder of 2024. Refer to the schedule in the meeting packet.
- As a reminder, the August 22 Executive Committee meeting is cancelled due to the Ryan White Conference; the Operations Committee will continue to meet.
- Commission staff provided a refresher on AB2449, which allows members to participate virtually in Brown Act meetings up to two times per year for Commission and assigned Committee meetings. This requires both audio and video access for the entire meeting and disclosure of persons over 18.
- Staff is exploring partnerships with other commissions to share costs associated with establishing an account for telephonic participation amid technical challenges.
- A refresher was provided on the County's travel policy, emphasizing the reimbursement model. The Commission has advocated for travel advances for unaffiliated consumer members and will continue to do so. Non-unaffiliated consumer members must continue to pay upfront for travel expenses and will be reimbursed for eligible expenses. The Committee requested guidance for non-unaffiliated consumer members who lack the financial means to pay upfront for Commission-sponsored travel.
- As a reminder, the County provides resources for members without laptops or internet access. The COH projects meeting packets and provides laptops during meetings for those in need. Staff regularly checks in with members experiencing technical challenges to ensure their needs are met.
- The LGBTQ+ Commission, recently established and still in its early stages, is developing its policies and procedures. Cheryl Barrit, MPIA, Executive Director, has met with Sunitha Menon, Executive Director of the LGBTQ+ Commission, to offer support and explore potential partnerships, to include the LGBTQ+ Commission taking lead on Pride event participation.
- DHSP reported receiving a 10-month CDC Prevention award of \$16.2 million, reflecting an approximate \$1.8 million reduction over 12 months, effective August 1, 2024. Adjustments will be made to testing programs, biomedical prevention investments, and STD service modalities, among others. DHSP will consider insights from prevention focus groups, Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) activities, and an assessment of services yielding the greatest impact. DHSP is marshalling internal resources to refine the HIV testing request for proposal (RFP).
- DHSP reported six cases of Mpox at the end of the previous week, averaging approximately 2.1 cases per week over the past six months. There are no signs of an uptick.



- DHSP continues efforts to refine the Ambulatory Outpatient Medical (AOM) and Medical Care Coordination (MCC) services.
- Refer to Committee and subordinate working groups reports for remaining updates.

### 3. Planning, Priorities and Allocations (PP&A)

Link to the July 16, 2024 meeting packet: [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- DHSP staff provided a brief recap of PY33 expenditures and a presentation on Program Year (PY) 34 allocation scenarios. Total expenditures for PY33 exceeded the total award amount by approximately \$3 million. DHSP was able to cover the overage via HIV/STI Net County Cost and other grants but noted these funds are not unlimited and may be needed to support other services in the future.
- Due to projection estimates being higher than available grant funds, the committee had to redistribute its initial projected allocation percentages. Total Part A and Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) grant funds for PY34 is approximately \$41.3 million. Previously projected RWP Part A and MAI grant fund expenditures total approximately \$45 million. DHSP staff met with PP&A and Commission on HIV co-chairs prior to the meeting to discuss potential reallocations. The proposed reallocations were presented to the committee and a discussion was held prior to approving PY34 allocations. PY34 allocations can be found in the meeting packet.
- To help maximize funds, some services were moved to other funding sources. It was noted that just because services were removed from RWP funding does not indicate that services have stopped.
- The Committee voted for RWP Service Category priorities via dot vote. Votes will be tallied and reviewed at the August 27 PP&A meeting.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Commissioners who have not completed the 2024 Priority Setting and Resource Allocation training need to complete the training by August 26. If you do not view the training, you will not be eligible to vote for final priorities and allocations to be presented at the September COH meeting. The recording of the training can be found on the Commission website under [2024 Trainings](#). Commissioners must notify Commission staff, Lizette Martinez, to be marked as complete.
- Participation from consumers and commissioners at the August 27<sup>th</sup> PP&A Committee meeting to help inform the PY35 allocations. The next PP&A Committee meeting will be on August 27<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-4pm at the Vermont Corridor.





#### 4. Standards and Best Practices (SBP)

Link to the August 6 meeting packet [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The Committee reviewed public comments received and approved the revised Ambulatory Outpatient Medical (AOM) service standards and elevated the document to the Executive Committee.
- Program staff from the Alliance for Housing and Healing provided an overview of their Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) program and shared client testimonials highlighting positive experiences with the program. The Committee held a robust discussion of the program components and will continue their review of the EFA service standards review in September.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Participation from consumers at upcoming SBP Committee meetings to help inform the revising of the EFA service standards.
- The next SBP Committee will be on September 3, 2024 from 10am-12pm at the Vermont Corridor.

#### 5. Public Policy

Link to the August 5, 2024 meeting packet [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The Public Policy Committee did not meet in July and in August. The next Public Policy Committee meeting will be on September 16, 2024 from 1pm to 3pm at the Vermont Corridor.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Review [NMAC's Get Out The Vote \(GOTV\)](#) campaign which aims to educate the HIV community, encourage voter turnout among marginalized communities, and collaborate with other movement-related organizations

#### 6. Aging Caucus

Link to the August 6, 2024 meeting packet [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- Reviewed initial ideas and general outline of a special educational event co-hosted by the Aging and Women's Caucuses scheduled for September 23. The educational event will focus on overcoming social isolation and building community for BIPOC women ages 50 and over. This event will commemorate National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day (Sept. 18).
- The event will take place at the Vermont Corridor from 9am to 2pm. Event planning and speaker invitations will continue and a flyer will be forthcoming.



- The Aging Caucus also revisited its priorities and directives to shift focus on 1 achievable activity and assess and identify more appropriate partners for collaboration. Some of the Aging Caucus' recommendations have been integrated ( and will continue to be) in service standards. Additionally, the formation of the Housing Task Force offers an additional opportunity to merge the housing-related activity into their workplan (Examine housing inventory to ensure that it provides safe and welcoming environments for seniors). The Caucus also discussed having a conversation with SAPC and DMH to learn what they are doing to address social isolation and loneliness in older adults.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Keep an eye out for the flyer for the September 23 educational event and spread the word with your clients and staff.
- Share model practices and resources for prevention and care for older adults living with HIV with the Aging Caucus.

## 7. Black Caucus

**Link to the July 18, 2024 meeting packet:** [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- DHSP reported plans to reach out to Black-led/servicing organizations that did not participate in the organization needs assessment to gauge interest in a DHSP-led focus group. Updates will be provided.
- Caucus co-chairs have been working with Dr. Tadios Belay and his team at the U.S. Africa Institute to coordinate a second round of the Black Immigrant Community Listening Session; flyer forthcoming.
- The Caucus confirmed the schedule for upcoming listening sessions, including: Same Gender Loving Men (September), Women (October), and Non-Traditional HIV Providers (November). Staff will coordinate planning meetings for each group.
- The Caucus will participate in the October 19 Taste of Soul event and recommended partnering with other organizations. Staff indicated they will request the Caucus's tent be placed near Dr. William King's for a warm hand-off for HIV testing. More details to follow.
- The Caucus decided to host its World AIDS Day event on December 6, 2024, at Charles Drew University; more details to follow.
- The next Caucus meeting will be on August 15, 2024.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Promote the BC and encourage participation.
- Incorporate the BAAC recommendations and ensure equitable representation in COH planning discussions and decision-making.

## 8. Consumer Caucus

**Link to the July 11, 2024 meeting packet:** [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The Caucus concluded its 2-part Mental Health presentation by the Department of Mental Health.
- The Caucus was invited to the upcoming Operations Committee meeting to participate in a discussion on the COH's stipend policy for unaffiliated consumer members.
- Members were reminded of the Priority Setting & Resource Allocation (PSRA) process and strongly encouraged to participate.
- Caucus co-chairs will continue planning for the remaining 2024 meetings, including presentations on Hepatitis C and end-of-life estate planning.
- An all-Caucus co-chair planning luncheon is being coordinated for October 14, in lieu of the Commission meeting, to plan for a consumer resource fair in February 2025.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Promote the Caucus and encourage participation.
- Ensure equitable representation in COH planning discussions and decision-making.

## 9. Transgender Caucus

**Link to the July 23, 2024 meeting packet** [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The Caucus revisited their meeting schedule for the remainder of 2024 and will meet on the following dates: 8/27, 9/24, 10/22, and 11/26.
- The Caucus approved their revised recommendations to the PP&A Committee for the PSRA process.
- The Caucus shared their reflections from Pride events members attended and expressed the need for Pride events that are less about spectacle and more about community-building and celebrating local talent.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- The next Caucus meeting will be on August 27 from 10am-12pm via WebEx.

## 10. Women's Caucus

**Link to notice of cancellation:** [HERE](#)

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The July Women's Caucus meeting was cancelled. Instead, the caucus co-hosted a special in-person lunch presentation with APLA titled "HIV Matters for Her" with Dr. Judith Currier on July 15<sup>th</sup> from 12:30pm – 2:00pm at the Vermont Corridor. The presentation provided an update on women's HIV health issues. Presentation slides can be found on the Commission website under [Events](#).



- The Caucus is working collaboratively with the Aging Caucus for a special event focusing on social isolation and building community for BIPOC Women ages 50 and over. The event will be held on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Vermont Corridor; more details to follow.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- The caucus meets quarterly and will reconvene on Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> from 2pm-4pm virtually via Webex.

Continue to promote the WC within your networks and encourage your clients and/or peers to attend WC meetings and events.

## 11. Housing Task Force

Link to the July 26 meeting packet [HERE](#).

**Key outcomes/results from the meeting:**

- The HTF reviewed a list of ideas for their workplan and discussed selecting 1 to 2 activities. There was overall consensus on conducting a needs assessment focused on housing needs, barriers, and understanding the range of services and entry points for housing services available for PWLH (not just those provided under HOPWA and Ryan White programs). The HTF discussed engaging front line staff in the needs assessments to get a fuller picture of boots on the ground challenges and opportunities for accessing and expanding housing for PWLHA. A meeting participant shared their personal story about the confusing and frustrating process of duplicative paper work, unrealistic deadlines for paperwork submission, and being led to believe that funding is available for services.
- The next virtual HTF meeting will be held on August 23 from 9am to 10am. The meeting will focus on approving the workplan, developing a timeline for housing-focused needs assessment, and developing the needs assessment questions.
- Please check the Commission website for the meeting agenda and packet.

**Action needed from the full body:**

- Submit questions you would like to include in the housing needs assessment to staff.
- Submit data sources or studies around housing that you may be aware of to help the HTF shape its housing needs assessment.

## 12. Annual Conference Planning Workgroup

- The workgroup presented a draft program outline to the Executive Committee on July 25 for initial reactions and feedback. The conference format will include breakout sessions in the afternoon. The workgroup will meet again on August 26 via WebEx to finalize the program theme, breakout session titles, and call for abstracts document. Breakout sessions will feature innovations and model practices in prevention and care in the context of health equity and intersectionalities.
- The annual conference will be held on November 14 at the MLK Behavioral Health Center conference facility.



## BLACK CAUCUS COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

APRIL 26, 2024  
“BRIDGING FAITH AND SEXUAL HEALTH  
IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV”

### INTRODUCTION

The “Bridging Faith and Sexual Health in the Fight Against HIV” listening session took place on Friday, April 26, from 6-8 PM at Saint Mark LA United Methodist Church. Facilitated by Dr. Donta Morrison and Lilieth Conolly, the session brought together 16 participants from LA County's Black interfaith communities. It fostered engaging dialogue, resulting in actionable insights addressing the root causes of stigma and shame within the Black interfaith communities, addressing the disproportionate impact of STIs and HIV. Participants were provided with a \$50 gift card, a nourishing meal, and community resources.

### OBJECTIVE

Through community listening sessions focusing on seven key populations identified in the Black Caucus (formerly the Black/African American Community Taskforce [BAAC]) recommendations, we aim to quantify the sexual health needs of Black communities in Los Angeles County. These discussions will guide improvements in HIV prevention and care service delivery, ensuring cultural responsiveness and a comprehensive understanding of the diverse sexual health care needs of our Black communities in Los Angeles County.



## KEY DISCUSSION TAKEAWAYS

**Culture of Silence:** Within the church, there is a pervasive silence surrounding sexuality and romantic feelings, fostering confusion and encouraging individuals to hide due to prevailing stigma and shame.

**Sexuality as Sin:** Sexuality is often deemed sinful within church discourse, leading to a widespread avoidance of discussions on the topic.

**Harmful Practices:** Practices such as attempting to "pray the gay away" persist within certain church circles, perpetuating discrimination and harm.

**Safe Spaces for Youth:** Some churches prioritize creating safe spaces for youth through dedicated services and panels, fostering an environment where young individuals feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics.

**Challenges for Traditional Churches:** Traditional churches encounter challenges adapting to the evolving needs of younger generations, often struggling to maintain relevance and engagement.

**Eroded Safe Spaces:** Historical shifts have eroded the status of Black churches as safe spaces, where they once served as vital sources of information and community resources.

**Programs for Youth:** Investing in programs tailored to the needs of young people, including dedicated budget allocations, demonstrates a commitment to their well-being and engagement.

**Youth Inclusion:** Youth inclusion in decision-making processes and leadership development is crucial for ensuring the relevancy and sustainability of church communities.

**Progressive Attitudes:** While some churches embrace progressive attitudes and demonstrate LGBTQIA+ inclusivity in leadership, many others lag behind in this regard.

**Community-Centric Approaches:** There is a pressing need for community-centric approaches and increased opportunities for dialogue within faith spaces to address community needs.

**Patriarchy:** Churches must address the entrenched danger of patriarchy and actively work to dismantle systems that marginalize and silence women's voices.

**Collaboration and Unity:** Building collaboration and unity among churches is essential, moving away from division and competition towards collective efforts to address societal challenges.

**Sexual Health Education:** Implementing sexual health education and awareness programs within churches can address stigma and promote understanding of diverse sexualities and identities.

## CONTACT INFO

**EML:** [hivcomm@lachiv.org](mailto:hivcomm@lachiv.org)

**WEB:** <https://hiv.lacounty.gov>

**TEL:** 213.738.2816



## FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### Involvement of Healthcare Professionals in Church Leadership:

- Integrate healthcare professionals into church leadership to provide expertise in addressing sexual health issues within faith communities.

### Need for Sexual Health Education and Resources:

- Half of participants feel ill-equipped to discuss sexual health, highlighting a crucial gap in knowledge and resources within faith communities.
- The majority lack awareness of where to refer individuals for sexual health resources, emphasizing the need for accessible and culturally responsive referral systems.
- There is a consensus on the importance of vetting resources to ensure their cultural relevance and effectiveness in supporting sexual health initiatives.

### Marketing and Education Strategies:

- Creative marketing strategies, mirroring approaches used on platforms like TikTok, are suggested to promote faith-based sexual health education.
- Normalizing sexual health discussions and incorporating educational materials into various church settings and community events can help destigmatize the topic.

### Youth Involvement and Advocacy:

- Incentivize youth involvement and include advocacy and training on STIs and HIV as essential components of comprehensive sexual health initiatives.

- Listening sessions throughout faith communities can provide a platform for individuals to share their experiences and needs.

### County Support and Funding:

- Establish a county ambassador program within faith networks to disseminate information and resources effectively.
- Participants express dissatisfaction with current county services and emphasize the need for specific funding and technical assistance tailored for faith communities.
- Technical assistance is needed to build infrastructure, address barriers in grant applications, and provide grant writing training to enhance skills and collaboration among faith leaders.
- Create an incubation academy specific to faith communities to provide technical assistance and support to churches in implementing sexual health programs.
- Propose the creation of a Los Angeles County Coalition of Black Churches, funded via a Request for Proposal (RFP), aimed at combating STIs and HIV, providing comprehensive support and resources, and advocating for the sexual health needs of the community.
- Provide basic HIV, STI, and sexual health training and education to equip faith leaders with the necessary knowledge and skills.
- Offer guidance on how to communicate with individuals living with or at risk of HIV, and how to bridge the gap between faith teachings and scientific knowledge.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

The insights gathered from the "Bridging Faith and Sexual Health in the Fight Against HIV" listening session underscore the critical need for culturally responsive HIV prevention and care services within LA County's Black interfaith communities. The session highlighted the pervasive culture of silence and stigma surrounding sexuality, particularly within church settings, and emphasized the importance of fostering open, empathetic dialogue.

Key recommendations include integrating healthcare professionals into church leadership, providing comprehensive sexual health education and resources, and employing creative marketing strategies to normalize sexual health discussions. Additionally, prioritizing youth involvement and establishing a county ambassador program within faith networks were identified as essential steps to enhance community engagement and support.

The proposed creation of a Los Angeles County Coalition of Black Churches, supported by targeted funding and technical assistance, aims to build infrastructure and collaboration among faith leaders. This coalition will play a pivotal role in addressing the sexual health needs of the community, advocating for the inclusion and support of individuals living with or at risk of HIV.

By implementing these recommendations, we can work towards a more inclusive, informed, and supportive environment within our Black interfaith communities, ultimately improving the overall health and well-being of our Black communities.

