Latino Policy Forum COVID-19 Work Summary

The Forum is responding to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the Latino community in Illinois through the following analyses, advocacy, information, and outreach measures.

ANALYSIS: The Forum is applying its core-competency capabilities in analysis to all COVID-19-related topics, including:

- Analyzing federal stimulus proposals, including the CARES Act, the HEROES Act, HEALS Act, and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, to determine their impact on Latinos
- Commissioning the highly credentialed survey group Latino Decisions to sample Illinois for data on the effects of COVID-19 on Latinos, which found that as of May 16, 62 percent of Latino households in Illinois had suffered job loss, loss of family-business income, or pay cuts.
- Analyzing philanthropic and other major funding programs for COVID-19, determining that 21 percent of grant awards ($5.1M) have gone to Latino-led and predominantly Latino-serving organizations
- Developing proposals for housing and basic human-needs resources to state government
- Creating preliminary recommendations informed by national literature and a convening of education stakeholders to support linguistically and culturally diverse students during remote learning in a time of COVID-19

ADVOCACY: The Forum is using its influential voice to advocate for equitable support to all communities that are most vulnerable to COVID-19, including:

- Advocating for equitable allocation of resources with philanthropic, state, Chicago, and Cook County leaders, ensuring that an estimated $5.1M from the Chicago COVID fund and an estimated $2.5M from the State COVID fund have served those in need in the Latinx community
- Serving on the Emergency Assistance for Illinois Families Coalition, advocating for a state appropriation of emergency cash assistance program, allocating over $60M to IDHS
- Providing recommendations to ensure inclusion of Latino communities in the City’s plan, including undocumented entrepreneurs and cash-economy workers, as part of the Mayor’s taskforce on economic recovery
- Supporting passage of the Illinois COVID-19 and Economic Recovery Emergency Renter and Homeowner Protection Act, which awarded nearly $400M in financial relief for residential renters, homeowners, and small landlords
- Advocating with IDHA to provide other funding options to mixed-status families or other families who did not receive state or federal rental relief
Meeting with the Governor’s and Mayor’s office and Cook County Presidents to formally request better health protections for Latino communities given disproportionate impact of COVID on them

Formally requesting that the CDC be invited to Illinois to assess and respond to the crisis

Serving on IllinoisUnidos, a coalition consisting of elected officials, health professionals, and community leaders to develop and implement strategies to address disproportionate impact of COVID on communities of color

Participating in COVID 19 City of Chicago Recovery Taskforce

**INFORMATION:** The Forum is updating critical state data that exposes COVID-19’s disproportionate impact on Latinos, particularly statistics showing that **11 of the 15 zip codes/geographic locales with the highest per-100,000 case rates are majority Latino, and that the Latino per-100,000 case rate exceeds that of all other racial-ethnic groups.** This data is being disseminated via:

- The Forum website and COVID resource page, social media, and IllinoisUnidos website
- **Webinars** and other online conferences
- Over 12 media appearances in leading outlets **ABC, WGN, Telemundo, and Univision**
- Op-eds published in leading publications, such as **Crain’s Chicago Business**, and press releases for IllinoisUnidos
- Organizing and facilitating ongoing meetings (seven to date) with all **Acuerdo members** to inform and take pulse of issues facing community leaders
- Over 10 virtual events including webinars in English and Spanish to provide updates and guidance related to “public charge” issues

**OUTREACH and ASSISTANCE:** Through existing relationships throughout the Latino community, the Forum is reaching out to all Latino entities to ensure they are informed and supported by:

- Reaching out to **Acuerdo** network of over 130 organizations and expanding outreach efforts to the Mexican Consulate, Home Town Clubs, and the 20 volunteer-led organizations of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Obtaining and developing processes to ensure smooth disbursement of an estimated **$575,000 in economic assistance to organizations that will identify individuals in need**
- Working with Deputy Governor Sol Flores to assist in setting up **mobile testing sites** for Latino-majority communities and neighborhoods with high COVID-19 rates
- Working with the **Greater Chicago Food Depository** to increase access to food pantries among Latino communities in need across the state