



# Local Organizations Seek County Support to Extend VIDA Community Health Worker Program

[Celia Jiménez](#) Mar 3, 2022

The peak of the agricultural harvest season is around the corner, and local organizers believe that community health workers are still critical in preventing Covid-19 when thousands of farmworkers, both locals and seasonal visitors, return to the fields. They are asking for an extension of the VIDA program, a countywide community health worker initiative.

The peak of the harvest season coincides with the end of initial county funds allocated so far, \$4.9 million, to maintain current staff levels. Thanks to a \$3.9 million federal health literacy grant and \$100,000 from the Public Health Institute, the program is already set to continue for two more years, but in a smaller capacity – instead of 48 full-time community health workers, it will have 18.

“The program was very important in getting things to the stage where we are,” says Jack Herbig, a leader with the group COPA (Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action), which was instrumental in launching VIDA.

COPA is advocating for \$1.5 million in county funds to keep 48 workers through the end of 2022, and on March 8, will make their case to the Board of Supervisors, where four votes are required to fund the extension.

Community health workers often deliver health care outside of health care settings, in places like grocery stores and churches. VIDA has adapted since it started a year ago, from providing information on health and financial resources to encouraging people to get vaccinated and hosting testing sites. Going forward, it will continue to adapt, but keep on doing the same: encouraging families to get kids vaccinated and providing support in high-risk areas.