

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**American Indian Maternal Childhood Care in California
Update on Current Status of Maternal & Infant Health**

Sacramento— June 18, 2019 — Today in Sacramento, the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Division of the California Department of Public Health released the [California American Indian/Alaska Native Maternal and Infant Health Status Report](#). The Report is the first of its kind to provide a comprehensive range of measures to describe the health and well-being of AIAN mothers and babies. The report was developed in partnership and guided by input from urban and tribal partners, including the California Consortium for Urban Indian Health (CCUIH) and the California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB). The report is an effort to address the historic health inequities among California’s AIAN families.

CCUIH’s Director of Policy and Planning, Virginia Hedrick, shared, “Advocacy for our Indian babies and mothers was the beginning of modern Indian health care services we have today. While the data shows we still have a long road ahead of us, an adequate data source is long overdue to affirm what we have felt and known in our communities for years.” “CRIHB is honored to partner with CCUIH and state representatives in the development of this important report that focuses on the health and well-being of Indian mothers and babies in California,” said CRIHB’s Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Mark LeBeau. “I strongly encourage all administrators and policymakers to implement the recommendations outlined in the report as they will improve the health status of these treasured members of our Indian communities. Women and children are keepers of our traditions and stories and the back bone of our community. This report documents our challenges, but also shows the resiliency and strength of our mothers and youth,” continued Dr. LeBeau.

The report findings showed that alongside many factors of resilience AIAN mothers and infants are subject to poor health outcomes and health disparities. While the overall rate of infant mortality in California has declined steadily since 2005, the California AIAN infant mortality rate has remained steady; infant deaths due to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) were three times higher for AIAN infants compared to California infants overall. The report is not only integral in its data findings, it also innovative in its methods to accurately capture AIAN data. [Fact sheets](#) and [Social Media posts](#) can be found at: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/MIHA>

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