California Department of Public Health
It Could Do More to Ensure Federal Funds for Expanding the State’s COVID-19 Testing and Contact Tracing Programs Are Used Effectively

Key Recommendations
To ensure that Public Health is using ELC COVID-19 funds effectively, it should do the following:

- Reevaluate its contact tracing plans and collaborate with local health jurisdictions to overcome barriers to contact tracing.
- Collect and approve, as necessary, all initial work plans and quarterly updates from local health jurisdictions to which it allocated ELC COVID-19 funds.
- Direct the provision of system performance, data validation, and regular reporting to mitigate further risks to the State’s new COVID-19 test results system.

Key Findings
- The State has met, and even exceeded, Public Health’s targets for testing individuals for COVID-19.
- Contact tracing efforts throughout California have lagged behind case surges that far exceeded Public Health’s initial planning.
- By January 2021, only about 12,100 tracing staff were employed statewide rather than the 31,400 that Public Health estimated would be needed.
- Public Health has been slow to collect and review work plans, spending plans, and quarterly updates for local entities that received ELC COVID-19 funds.
- Public Health delayed required information technology project oversight for a new COVID-19 test results system, which could create complications in the functionality of the system.

In December 2020, Contact Tracing Successfully Identified Additional People to Contact in Only a Small Fraction of Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracing contacts attempted</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews completed</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional contacts identified</td>
<td>16%</td>
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</tbody>
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COVID-19
834,487 cases

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