ChangeLab Solutions

Our mission is to create healthier communities for all through equitable laws and policies.

Who We Are

ChangeLab Solutions is a national organization that advances equitable laws and policies to ensure healthy lives for all. We prioritize communities whose residents are at highest risk for poor health. Our multidisciplinary team of lawyers, planners, policy analysts, and other professionals works with state and local governments, advocacy organizations, and anchor institutions to create thriving communities.

Our Work

We can work with you to develop equitable laws, policies, and strategies for change, so that everyone in your community – no matter who they are or where they live – can lead a healthy life.

WHY WE DO THIS WORK: Health Equity

We strive to give everyone a fair chance to live a healthy life. For far too long, laws and policies have been used to promote the health of some, but not all. We focus on undoing the harms of structural racism and other forms of institutionalized discrimination. Our work creates lasting change by grounding law and policy in local needs.

WHAT WE BRING: Expertise & Evidence

We share our knowledge of what is effective for advancing health-promoting policies. Our diverse team works across sectors and disciplines, bringing legal, policy, and planning expertise to inform our work. We offer guidance, technical assistance, and research, all grounded in best practices. And our free online library offers legally sound policies with a proven track record of implementation.

HOW WE WORK: Collaboration & Partnership

We believe that collaborative partnerships are necessary to solve multifaceted public health problems. We learn from those we work with, expanding our capacity and knowledge to better serve others. Our goal is to help communities improve their health by providing individualized services that complement and leverage community knowledge and strengths.

WHAT WE OFFER: Legal Know-How + Strategies That Make Policies Work

We help communities solve complex issues. Our multidisciplinary team can create custom research, analyses, case studies, or products tailored to your issue or community. Our trainings help communities build knowledge and skills to effect change, even after the trainings are over.
Our Services

Research & Analysis
Policy analysis and legal research to answer critical questions about financing, enforcement, and impact

Sugary Drink Warning Labels: A legal update
This legal update describes important takeaways from 3 recent court cases that are relevant to sugary drink warning labels as an emerging policy strategy.

Equity First: Conceptualizing a normative framework to assess the role of preemption in public health
A journal article in The Milbank Quarterly proposes development of an equity-first framework to help establish evidence-based criteria for evaluating whether preemption will enhance or inhibit equity.

Policy & Strategy Development
Tailored development of model policies and laws; guidance in forming, improving, and assessing strategies for change

A Blueprint for Changemakers: Achieving health equity through law & policy
This resource presents legal strategies and best practices to help policymakers, practitioners, and communities address inequities and improve health outcomes.

Long-Range Planning for Health, Equity & Prosperity: A primer for local governments
This guide poses a series of questions in order to provoke thoughts on how planners can prioritize health and equity in their work.

Individualized Coaching
Guidance on some or all of the policy process — from identifying your policy needs and building support to implementing and evaluating a recently adopted policy

New Rhode Island Law Says “No” to Junk Food Marketing in Schools
ChangeLab Solutions provided technical assistance and model legislation to the American Heart Association in Rhode Island with the goal of passing statewide legislation to shield school kids from marketing of foods and beverages that do not meet federal nutrition standards.

The Fight for Health Equity in California’s Central Valley
ChangeLab Solutions supported Cultiva La Salud’s efforts by offering technical assistance and guidance on how to drive more equitable infrastructure investment and how to participate in the development of Fresno’s Active Transportation Plan, which aims to make walking and biking safe and accessible for all.

Training & Capacity Building
In-person training sessions or online webinar series for legal and non-legal audiences on public health law, policy development, or specific issues

Public Health Law Academy: Free trainings to advance skills & competencies in public health
These trainings provide a deeper understanding of the use of law and policy to improve population health outcomes.

Health in All Policies: Collaborating across sectors to improve health
These resources are intended for anyone interested in building the capacity of governments and communities to promote health through more collaborative and efficient policymaking.

Communities of Practice
Convening and facilitation of working groups, multidisciplinary collaborations, or community stakeholders to discuss an issue or work toward a common goal

Building Healthy, Equitable Communities Series
In 7 virtual trainings with government and community leaders, we explore how law and policy changes backed by community power can advance health equity in a range of areas.

The Health & Housing Starter Kit: A guide for public health departments, housing authorities, & hospitals
This guide was developed to help local institutions take their first steps toward creating bold and innovative health and housing initiatives.

Product Development
Development of visually engaging, user-friendly fact sheets, guides, and infographics that advance new ideas and translate complex concepts into actionable solutions

Planning for Healthy, Equitable Communities (infographic series)
These 3 infographics are for public health practitioners who wish to partner with urban and regional planners as well as learn about how planning affects health and equity.

Sugary Drink Strategy Playbook: Reducing sugary drinks to promote community health & equity
This guide provides an overview of 10 strategies that communities can use to reduce consumption of sugary drinks.
Work Areas

Our innovative policy solutions address many aspects of creating healthier communities for all.

Good Governance

Laws and policies are powerful tools for making our communities healthier and more equitable. A good governance process is inclusive, transparent, and effective, and helps foster a clear understanding of policy landscapes, local resources, and potential partnerships. Our resources explain the essentials of public health law and policy that can help create meaningful, lasting change in your community.

SUCCESS STORY

Public Health Law Academy

Many public health students and professionals lack the know-how to effectively navigate the US legal system. In partnership with the CDC, we founded the Public Health Law Academy to help address this need and improve population health outcomes. To date, these free online trainings have been played over 3,000 times.

Healthy Neighborhoods

Evidence shows that where people live plays a key role in their health. Housing, workplaces, street design, and transportation all influence prominent health factors such as safety, physical activity, access to healthy food, community engagement, and affordable living. We provide planning tools that connect the dots between neighborhood resources and help communities achieve their policy goals.

SUCCESS STORY

Planning for Health Equity in Roanoke, VA

When it comes to health, partnerships between community institutions are often best situated to create long-lasting solutions. ChangeLab Solutions partnered with the City of Roanoke, Roanoke College, and Freedom First Credit Union, providing legal and policy technical assistance to help improve community health outcomes by integrating health equity into Roanoke’s 2040 comprehensive plan.
Food & Beverages

A healthy diet is key to maintaining good health. Well-designed food systems positively shape the health, environmental, social, and economic outcomes of neighborhoods and communities. We work on a variety of policy strategies that advance health equity through each component of the food system and that ensure access to healthy, affordable foods and beverages.

**SUCCESS STORY**
Rhode Island Protects Students from Junk Food Marketing
Marketing to kids in schools has long been controversial within the US education system. Starting in 2017, ChangeLab Solutions provided technical assistance and model legislation to the American Heart Association in Rhode Island. The goal of this partnership was to pass statewide legislation to shield school kids from marketing of foods and beverages that do not meet federal nutrition standards. After several years of legislative wrangling, the proposed bill was signed into law in 2018, effectively protecting 142,000 Rhode Island students from junk food advertising in their schools.

Child Care & Schools

Families have tremendous influence on the health of their children, but children are also cared for by other adults in their community. Child care and school environments often determine what items children are offered to eat and drink outside the home, as well as how much time they have for physical activity. We work on child care and school policy strategies that can support families in raising healthy children.

**SUCCESS STORY**
Building Safe & Uplifting School Environments in Richmond, CA
Over-policed, under-resourced environments make students feel less safe and can threaten their health and prosperity. RYSE, a community-based organization, has gathered insights from Richmond students on how to build uplifting school environments where students feel safe and ready to learn. ChangeLab Solutions helped RYSE support their insights with evidence-based facts.

Health Care

Health care systems and hospitals have opportunities to get involved in community public health initiatives. Partnering with advocates and local agencies, providing healthier foods and beverages, and leveraging community benefits allocations from hospitals can help keep people healthy and out of emergency rooms. Our resources help health care organizations and hospitals work toward community-based prevention of health problems.

**SUCCESS STORY**
Newark, NJ, Takes on Food Insecurity
Given that food insecurity affects so many New Jerseyans and strong evidence that food insecurity is directly linked to health and education outcomes, the Greater Newark Community Advisory Board and RWJBarnabas Health partnered with ChangeLab Solutions to do something about it. ChangeLab Solutions identified and tailored policy options to improve Newark’s food systems.

Tobacco Prevention

Limiting access to tobacco products is the first step in preventing tobacco-related diseases. Effective strategies include eliminating the sale of tobacco products to minors, regulating electronic cigarettes, increasing enforcement of existing laws, and reducing exposure to secondhand smoke. We offer a wide range of resources to help communities tailor and implement policy options to regulate tobacco.

**SUCCESS STORY**
Clark County, WA, Tackles E-Cigarettes
Concerned about the significant increase in use rates of electronic smoking devices for both adults and minors, Clark County’s Board of Health drafted a comprehensive policy based on ChangeLab Solutions’ model ordinance and training. The board unanimously passed the ordinance in 2015, prompting healthy changes within the community.

Want to learn more about our products and services?

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