

What is HEAL?

The [Dignity Not Detention Coalition](#) passed a [budget initiative called HEAL](#) to put money aside to incentivize cities to divest from immigration detention by providing them funding to invest in new industries and jobs. Our coalition is made up of community-based organizations across California formed to harness our statewide power to end immigration detention and reimagine a better future. DND won \$5 million in the 2023 budget, which will go through the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) over the next three years. HEAL presents a new tool in our advocacy toolbox to close detention centers once and for all.

Why is HEAL needed?

HEAL is a new organizing tool to tackle a major obstacle in detention site fights - carceral economies. Many DND members fought the 2020-2021 ICE detention expansion in Adelanto and McFarland (anchored by Shut Down Adelanto and Faith in the Valley, respectively). These fights emphasized the need to tackle carceral economies head-on when local cities cited job creation as their main reason to open three new detention centers. We also need to think long-term and transition away from carceral economies because we don't want these cages to close as detention centers only to reopen for some other carceral use.

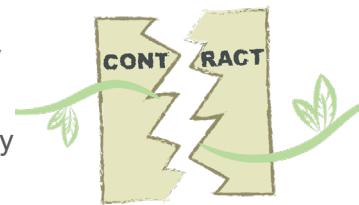


Think of HEAL as a new tool in our toolbox amongst the many strategies needed to close cages for good. Other tools include [Just Closure](#) (strategies to support those inside when facility closes, including fighting for release not transfers), other [Just Transitions](#) Strategies (tools beyond HEAL which facilitate [transitions away from carceral economies](#)), and [repurposing detention centers](#) (so that they're not pivoted to another carceral use), among others!

What has to happen before a community can get HEAL funds?

In order to be eligible for HEAL funds, a city or other locality must: 1) decide not to renew a permit for a detention center; 2) revoke a permit for a detention center; or 3) take other legislative action, such as passing an ordinance, that would end the operation of a detention center.

A community can also become eligible for HEAL funds if a private prison company or the U.S. government takes steps to close a detention center. For example, if ICE ends a detention contract with GEO Group, the city where the detention facility is located would also be eligible for HEAL funds.



Another way that a locality can become eligible for HEAL funds is if a detention center lays off at least 50% of its employees within a 6-month period. This shows that the detention center is winding down, and that the community is already in need of economic assistance to transition to a more sustainable industry.

Even if a city has not fully ended immigration detention within its boundaries, developing alternative, sustainable, and healthy economies will make that city less likely to continue permitting immigration detention to operate, or to permit a new one in the future. It's up to all of us to make sure HEAL has its full intended impact and to advocate locally for full closures.

What kind of programs can HEAL funds be used for?

HEAL funds can be used to apply for any program operated through the [California Workforce Development Board](#). Some programs include the High Roads Training Partnership program, which provides job training in high quality, well-paying jobs in sustainable industries.

For example, the [Inland Empire](#) has a high roads program that convenes labor organizations, employers, community and environmental justice organizations in partnership, with the goal of combining the reduction of emissions with industry-responsive training programs that lead to high quality careers.



What prevents a locality from getting HEAL funds, and then deciding to reopen a detention center?

A part of the HEAL initiative says that if a locality reopens a detention center, they will not be eligible for future HEAL funds. HEAL tries to dissuade officials from reopening detention centers with this penalty, as well as by taking away the city's incentive to permit an immigration detention in the first place by creating different, better jobs. But because HEAL can't fully prevent a locality from reopening a detention center, it's up to all of us to hold officials accountable if they try to reopen one.

How can I get involved?

Follow Dignity Not Detention on social media for more HEAL updates on [Twitter](#), and on [Facebook](#). You can also follow local site fights to close detention centers. Here is the website to shut down the Adelanto Detention Campaign: [shutdownadelanto.org](#).

Here are a couple of resources to learn more about the impact detention has on our communities.

- [Carceral Carousel](#): Report on why detention centers need to be closed for all purposes. Includes strategies and examples of how sustained organizing has succeeded in closing a detention center and making sure it doesn't transform into a facility for incarcerating a new group of people.
- [If You Build It, ICE Will Fill It](#): Report explaining that the building of immigration detention centers leads to higher arrests in a community that houses the detention center.
- [Communities Not Cages](#): A Just Transition Away from Immigration Detention Economies: Report analyzing the trends in immigration detention and arguing for incentives to help communities transition away from carceral economies.
- [CURB Prison Closure Roadmap](#): Report explaining how states can successfully close prisons and reinvest money into investments that help communities and improve infrastructure.
- [Repurposing Correctional Facilities to Strengthen Communities](#): Report examining successful prison closures and how the facility closures were used to benefit the community.