



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: 3-9-2021
Placement: D-1
Estimated Time: 1.5 hours
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Office
Director(s): Van Do-Reynoso, MPH, PhD, Director of Public Health

DocuSigned by:
Mona Miyasato
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Contact Info: Terri Nisich, Assistant CEO
Nancy Anderson, Assistant CEO

SUBJECT: Update on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: NA

Other Concurrence:

As to form: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file a brief update on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Santa Barbara County's response and operations;
- b) Provide any direction, as appropriate; and
- c) Determine that the above actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), because pursuant to sections 15378(b)(4) and 15378(b)(5) the recommended actions consist of organizational, administrative or fiscal activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary

Staff will provide the most recent information on the status of COVID-19 cases, the County's response and RISE business activity at the Board of Supervisors' meeting.

Staff has provided updates to the Board on the status of COVID-19 every week since March 10, 2020 while the Board has been in session, and has conducted press conferences weekly. Circumstances and

number of cases in the County are changing daily with the most updated information on the Public Health information portal at <https://publichealthsb.org>.

Discussion

The Public Health Department continues to work with the state to have real time information regarding the status of COVID 19 in Santa Barbara County and ensure they are aware of proposed changes in approach to disease mitigation proposed by the California State Department of Public Health. Since March 2020, County Public Health has consistently informed the Board of Supervisors and the community at large about the status of the disease of communities, demographics of those impacted, status of health officer orders, status of schools and waivers, state monitoring metrics, hospital beds and ICU capacity, guidance and updates from the California Department of Public Health, and most recently vaccine planning and distribution.

The County Executive Office continues to present an update on RISE Guide changes, business industry activity and outreach efforts. Updates on Self-Certification submittals and participation in other business programs available from the County is also presented.

On August 28, 2020, the Governor unveiled a new coronavirus four-tier, color monitoring system for counties, which replaced the County Monitoring List. The COVID19.ca.gov website has been refreshed to incorporate the new four-tier county ranking system. After being in Tier 2 – Substantial/Red since September 29, 2020, the County of Santa Barbara reverted to Tier 1 – Widespread/Purple as of November 16, 2020. On December 6, the County as part of the Southern California Region fell below 15% ICU capacity which triggered the Regional Stay at Home Order which ended on January 25, 2021. The County reverted to the State’s Blueprint for Safe Economy Purple Tier on January 26, 2021.

COVID-19 vaccination is one of the most important tools to end the COVID-19 pandemic. The State is prioritizing vaccines for equitable distribution to everyone in California who wants it. The State expects to have enough supplies to vaccinate most Californians in all 58 counties by summer 2021. The roll out of the vaccines has been in process since December in accordance with the State’s tiered system, which sets the priority order. Current information is available on the County’s website at publichealthsb.org

Background

Emergency Proclamations and Health Orders. On March 4, 2020, the Governor of California proclaimed a health emergency due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic.

On March 12, 2020 the Public Health Officer and Public Health Director declared a local health emergency for COVID-19. That same day the Director of Emergency Services proclaimed a local emergency. At that time, the County did not have any confirmed cases. On March 16, 2020, the Public Health Department reported the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Santa Barbara County. On March 17, 2020, the local declaration and proclamation were ratified by the Board of Supervisors.

On March 19, 2020, the Governor issued Executive N-33-20 which directed “shelter in place” for Californians to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the public health of residents.

On May 20, 2020, the State approved the County to accelerate through the State's Stage 2 phase of the Resilience Roadmap. The Public Health Officer has issued Health Orders to accompany the approval by the State and to be consistent with the State industry sector guidance.

State Monitoring: Four-Tier System. Every county in California is now assigned to a tier based on its test positivity and adjusted case rate. To move forward, a county must meet the next tier's criteria for 2 consecutive weeks. If a county's metrics worsen for 2 consecutive weeks, it will be assigned a more restrictive tier. Data is reviewed weekly and tiers are updated statewide on Tuesdays.

Santa Barbara County achieved the Red (Substantial) Tier 2 of the State of California's Framework on September, 29, 2020, however, was downgraded to Tier 1 – Widespread/Purple on November 16, 2020. The downgrade was the result of the State modifying its criteria to evaluate test positivity and adjusted case rates on a 4-day lag versus a 7-day lag in data. This change in process was initiated by the State due to the concern over growing numbers of cases across the State.

A new feature on the refreshed COVID-19.ca.gov website is the ability to search by county and activity to learn specific restrictions and requirements. The State has also posted an [Industry Sector List by Tier](#) that has a matrix of each industry by tier color.

On December 6, the State announced that counties within regions where ICU capacity falls below 15% will be placed into a more restrictive Regional Stay at Home Order for three weeks. The County of Santa Barbara was assigned to the Southern California Region. The restrictions included closing certain businesses and restricting capacity in others. The Regional Order was lifted on January 25, 2016 and the County reverted back to the Purple Tier of the Blueprint for Safe Economy.

On February 11, 2021, the County Public Health Officer issued [County Health Officer Order 2021-12-2](#) that updated information related to Places of Worship, wedding ceremonies and one-on-one personal fitness training. This order supersedes and replaces Health Officer Order 2021-12.1.

County's response and objectives. The County's objectives in this public health emergency response to COVID-19 are as follows:

1. Monitor and maintain the flattened curve through continued testing, disease monitoring, implementation of isolation, contact tracing, and treatment of COVID-19. Utilize the RISE guidance for evaluation and determination of re-closure of the community if needed.
2. Provide clear and timely situational status, guidance, and support to the health care system to limit the spread of the disease and ensure continuity of essential healthcare services. This includes assuring health worker screenings are conducted, and hospital patient surge and alternate care site plans are ready to activate.
3. Provide clear, coordinated, accurate and timely information through the Joint Information Center (JIC) to the public through social media, call centers and press releases and PSA's.
4. Maintain timely and accurate situational status to the CEO, Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Public Health Department (PHD), County Board of Supervisors (BOS), Operational Area Partners, California Officer of Emergency Services (CalOES) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).
5. Monitor and execute plan to support logistical requirements for isolation and quarantine of the public, health care workers, first responders and essential personnel. Monitor logistics plan to provide for ongoing acquisition, warehouse capability, inventory monitoring, and shipment of medical and non-medical resources.

6. Utilize EOC and DOC Logistics processes and plans to provide for ongoing resource support, including scarce resource allocation, isolation and quarantine activities, homelessness NCS, and ACS response.
7. Provide fiscal tracking and accountability and ensure costs appropriate with the values at risk. Facilitate the processes necessary to seek all eligible funding opportunities for reimbursement of response costs, temporary and permanent enhancements of programs as they relate to COVID, and economic recovery programs.
8. Develop and maintain a state of readiness for the potential need to respond to an increase in cases, additional COVID response support concepts, or a concurrent event. This should include concurrent event plans, MOU/MOA's, continuity of operations and government, community education, staff training and EOC facility readiness.
9. Maintain communications, outreach and coordination processes to share timely and accurate guidance with our Operational Area Partners including elected officials, cities, special districts, utilities, nonprofit organizations, and other agencies which provides situational awareness and support. Serve as the means for support and information to our local jurisdictions.
10. Implement strategies that facilitate community support systems, recovery of those systems and economic recovery. Guide business, government, non-profits and the Santa Barbara County community through the RISE process in a safe manner and in accordance with state and local guidance, state and local health orders and the RISE guidance.
11. Provide guidance and support as appropriate to ongoing community support programs for our most vulnerable populations, such as those serving the homeless, low Income, seniors, and COVID-19 high risk, and those who are food insecure. Continue serving as a conduit between Santa Barbara County and the State of California.

Vaccines. Local vaccine distribution updates are available on the Public Health website at <https://publichealthsb.org/vaccine/>. The Santa Barbara County Health Department will continue to follow guidelines from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to prioritize vaccine distribution. Vaccine production is slowly increasing in the United States. A phased approach will be used to ensure high-risk community members are prioritized as vaccine distribution continues.

Santa Barbara County has developed a COVID-19 vaccination plan with the intent of preparing our county for the phased implementation of the vaccine consistent with the approach initially set forth by CDPH. On January 26, 2021 the Governor announced a revised approach to vaccine distribution to build a system to equitable and efficiently administer vaccines when supply increases. This approach considers:

1. Simplifying Eligibility:

In simplifying eligibility beginning mid-February, the state will implement a statewide standard under which health care workers, individuals 65+ and education and child care, emergency services and food and agriculture workers will be eligible to start making appointments to receive the vaccine, pending vaccine availability. These are the groups identified in Phase 1B, Tier 1. More detail will be coming on specifics on timing to address those within this group. Distribution to groups is again contingent on the amount of vaccine received within a county.

Future groups are anticipated to become eligible based on age. This statewide standard will move in unison across all 58 counties. This will allow the state to scale capacity up while also ensuring the vaccine goes to disproportionately impacted communities.

2. Standardizing Information and Data:

The state is officially launching My Turn, a new system for Californians, to learn when they are eligible to be vaccinated, a place to make an appointment when eligible and a mechanism to easily track vaccination data. Through My Turn, individuals can sign up for a notification when they are eligible to make an appointment and schedule one when it is their turn. My Turn will also help track those who have yet to receive a second vaccine dose and need additional outreach. This system has been piloted well in LA and San Diego and expected to be available in mid to all counties.

3. Addressing Available Supply by Streamlining Vaccination Process:

The state, through a Third Party Administrator (TPA), will allocate vaccines directly to providers (health systems, pharmacies, health systems, public hospitals, community health centers, pharmacies and pop-up and mobile sites with an immediate focus on allocating to high-throughput providers such as hospitals that are vaccinating at a very high rate.) The vaccine provider network will expand as vaccine supply grows and vaccine characteristics change, with fixed and mobile sites used to meet the needs of individual communities.

Emergency Operations Center. The response effort is coordinated through the Public Health Department's Department Operations Center (DOC), with support from the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) focused on mitigating the spread of COVID-19, reducing the potential overload to the health care system and reopening the community in a safe manner. The EOC is supporting several teams and task forces on homeless sheltering, vulnerable(senior) populations, emergency feeding, donation and volunteer assistance, operational area (all government entities within the county) coordination, county continuity of services support, concurrent emergency planning, and economic and community recovery. The EOC continues to work the County Human Resources Department to spearhead a multi-government workforce coordination effort to provide workers where needed in the emergency response effort.

The EOC is coordinating the Joint Information Center (JIC), 2-1-1 resources, RISE Ambassadors, and an expanded Compliance and Code Enforcement Strategy. The JIC is providing a multiple pronged approach to public communications including the Public Health website (<https://publichealthsb.org/>), the Santa Barbara County Recovers (<https://recoverybc.org/>), social media, media relations, and direct community outreach materials. The EOC is supporting the continued development and support of Alternate Care Sites (ACS) and Non-Congregate Care Sites (NCS), to include multiple concepts for potential medical support locations, isolation and quarantine, homeless and vulnerable populations.

Education and Compliance. Lastly, the EOC is facilitating a multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline approach to coordination of education, outreach, compliance, and enforcement of current health orders with businesses and individuals. The primary focus of this effort is an expanded RISE Ambassador program considered the first effort in community education and outreach. The RISE Ambassador Program includes inviting all cities to host teams within their jurisdiction, as well as the county managing teams for each population area of unincorporated county. The Ambassador program is designed to work in coordination with City and County regulatory and enforcement efforts. These more enhanced enforcement efforts include a shared tracking mechanism, additional education and outreach, utilization of formal warnings of violation, and a variety of administrative, civil, and criminal enforcement actions that can be utilized. The County also hosts an online complaint form (at www.recoverybc.org) that allows for community members and businesses to bring non-compliance to the County's attention. Lastly, the Board

adopted an Ordinance for Administrative Fines for violation of COVID -19 Health Officer orders on November 10, 2020.

County Department Operations. County departments have activated their Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) and are prioritizing essential services, although other non-essential work also continues. To comply with the Governor's Executive Order to shelter-in-place, a majority of public counters are closed and alternative methods have been provided for the public to access County services. (A list is available on the County's website). All County employees are Disaster Service Workers and have been instructed to continue to report to work (on-site or tele-working) unless unable to do so. Departments have been instructed to follow health safety protocols for COVID-19 for any employees on-site.

Human Resources also implemented new leave policies, related to federal legislation regarding emergency employee sick leave and family leave, and developed an "emergency worker match" program to match employee and mutual aid volunteer skills with needed positions in the response.

Risk Management, Human Resources, General Services and the County Executive Office are coordinating guidance for County Departments to comply with State reopening guidelines where applicable.

RISE Business Activity. The County published the Santa Barbara County Reopening in Safe Environment, or RISE Guide on May 15, 2020. Within the framework of the Governor's Resilience Roadmap (now Blueprint for a Safer Economy), the County of Santa Barbara produced a companion guide to support the implementation of the roadmap for phased reopening. The guide was developed by experts who live and work in the region, supported by feedback from all sectors of the community. Additionally, the County has developed a Self-Certification Attestation process on-line for businesses reopening. Businesses are required to be familiar with State Industry Guidelines, County Health Orders and the RISE Guide, complete a plan to comply and self-certify on-line.

In order to minimize the impact of COVID-19, the County of Santa Barbara has encouraged the speedy recovery of businesses, restaurants, retail and other community entities that were required to close or curtail operations under the State of California's "Stay at Home" orders. The County developed the Small Business and Community Partnership Enhancement Program (SBCPEP), a clear, quick path and parameters for businesses and other entities to operate temporarily outdoors to accommodate social distancing.

After being in the Tier 2 – Red classification of the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy since September 29, several sectors have had to quickly adjust to more restrictions under Tier 1 – Purple that was announced on November 16. Businesses should check the State's [Industry Sector List by Tier](#) shown as Attachment A, that shows each industry's restrictions by tier color.

On December 6, the Southern California Region, which includes Santa Barbara, met the metrics for the more restrictive Regional Stay at Home Order. The Order further restricted business operations and travel. Bars, Wineries, Personal Services, Hair Salons and Barbershops were temporarily closed. Sectors that remained open were Schools with waivers, Critical Infrastructure, Retail @ 20% and Restaurants (take-out and delivery only). The Regional Order was lifted on January 25 and the County reverted to the Purple Tier status. The County issued a Health Officer Order effective January 26 at 8a.m providing for activities consistent with the Purple Tier resume.

In December 2020, the federal government approved further funding and COVID relief, which provided over \$900billion in a variety of categories, including relief for businesses another round of Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), cultural venues, transportation, and schools. Congress is currently considering the proposed Coronavirus Local Fiscal Relief Recovery Fund that would use a formula that divides \$130.2 billion for local aid evenly between cities and counties. Cities would receive their allocation according to a modified form of the Community Development Block Grant

formula and county funding would be allocated according to population. The County's estimated allocation is \$87 million. Funds would be available until expended and the County could use the funds to:

- respond to or mitigate the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or its negative economic impacts;
- cover costs incurred as a result of the emergency;
- replace revenue that was lost, delayed, or decreased; or
- address the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 emergency.

The State is also attempting to address business relief by extending sales tax payments by three months for taxpayers with less than \$1 million in sales tax, expanding interest-free payment agreements to larger companies with up to \$5 million in sales tax, issuance of \$100 million in funding for main street hiring tax credits, grants up to \$25,000 for small businesses/non-profits/cultural institutions and issuance of \$125 million for low interest loans for small businesses. On February 17, 2021, the Governor and legislators reached agreement to provide an additional \$9.6 billion in immediate action pandemic relief to low wage workers and small businesses.

Response Costs and Funding. On February 16, 2021, the County of Santa Barbara began offering more than \$13 million in federal Emergency Rental & Utility Assistance through United Way of Santa Barbara County to eligible County of Santa Barbara residents, that have experienced a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and can demonstrate the need for rental support. This Emergency Rent Assistance Program is intended to prevent homelessness by providing rent assistance to residents. Assistance is available to all Santa Barbara residents in an amount up to \$6,000 over 3 months. The website to apply and find information is at <https://www.unitedwaysb.org/rent>. In addition to this funding, the State has allocated \$14.3 million for Santa Barbara County through its State Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The State's program is currently being developed and will be coordinated with the County's local program.

The Board of Supervisors approved the budget for FY 2020-21 on July 14, 2020, which included \$46.1 million in allocations of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to the pandemic response. The approximately \$46.1 million received from the State was allocated to Public Health response costs; care of vulnerable populations, including the unsheltered; technology to support the delivery of public services and telecommuting; direct COVID-10 service employee costs; impact on County facilities; and direct community and small business assistance.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

This agenda item is for information and administrative purposes only. There are no current budget impacts associated with this report.

Attachment:

Attachment A State Industry Sectors by Tier

Authored by:

Nancy Anderson and Terri Nisich, Assistant County Executive Officers