



**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: November 16, 2021
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Director(s): Van Do-Reynoso, MPH, PhD, Director of Public Health
Maria Elena De-Guevara, Director of Human Resources

Contact Info: Terri Nisich, Assistant CEO
Nancy Anderson, Assistant CEO

DocuSigned by:
M. Miyasato
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SUBJECT: Update on the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: NA

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;
- 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;
- d) Reconsider the circumstances of the COVID-19 state of emergency;
- e) Consider whether state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing;

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- f) Find that the Board of Supervisors has considered the circumstances of the state of emergency, and that State or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing; and
- g) Direct staff to notice and hold hearings as remote hearings consistent with Government Code § 54953(e)(3).

Summary Text:

Santa Barbara County is continuing ongoing robust efforts to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Staff from Public Health, Human Resources and the County Executive Office may present updates as information changes throughout the response. Most recent actions at a state and local level include but are not limited to the following items listed. On July 26, 2021, as the Delta COVID variant numbers continued to climb in California, a [State Health Order](#) on masking and testing was announced for mandatory masking and testing in particular settings including acute health care, long- term care, high- risk congregate settings, and certain other health care settings. On July 28, 2021, a recommendation for universal masking indoors statewide was added, which can be found [here](#). On August 4, 2021, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD) issued a local Health Officer Order mandating the use of universal face coverings in indoor settings countywide. The SBCHOO was extended on September 5, 2021, October 5, 2021 and November 5, 2021. The most recent full HOO on indoor face coverings can be found [here](#).

The County Health Officer will consider additional changes to the mandate when case rates, hospitalizations and ICU capacity decline in Santa Barbara County. SBCPHD is closely monitoring data on a regular basis which will determine the duration of the mandate. During the meeting of November 9, 2021, SBCPHD provided a presentation/status report on the key metrics as well as other key factors for consideration for modifying the indoor masking mandate.

A Supervisor requested that the Board consider the circumstances of the emergency and if appropriate, direct staff to holding hearings as remote hearings consistent with Government Code section 54953(e)(3). These are presented in actions d) through g). On September 28, 2021, Santa Barbara County Health Officials issued a social distancing recommendation related to the passing of AB 361. AB 361 sets forth a process to allow the use of teleconferencing for open public meetings without needing to comply with certain Brown Act teleconference requirements if certain findings are made by the legislative body. The health officer recommendation is intended to be available for use by legislative bodies in making a determination of whether to hold in-person hearings, virtual hearings, or a hybrid of both. Further, the recommendation recommends social distancing measures to promote public participation while encouraging participants to protect themselves against COVID- 19. The full health officer recommendation can be found [here](#).

The Delta Variant, an infectious strain of COVID-19 is of great concern as cases are increasing locally in Santa Barbara County. Information on the Delta Variant can be found at: <https://publichealthsb.org/delta-variant/>. Circumstances and vaccination updates are changing daily with the most updated information on the Public Health information portal at <https://publichealthsb.org>.

Discussion

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

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of health officer orders, status of schools and waivers, state monitoring metrics, hospital beds and ICU capacity, vaccine planning and distribution, guidance and updates from the California Department of Public Health, RISE Guide changes, business industry activity and outreach efforts.

Key Data Highlights

For most up-to-date COVID 19 data for Santa Barbara County, please refer to our [Community Data Dashboard](#). As of November 2, 2021:

- 60.5% of SB County fully vaccinated
- 71.4% of eligible fully vaccinated
- New cases: 32, Active cases: 276, Total cases: 44,234
- Case Rate per 100k as of October 29, 2021: 8.3
- Test Positivity as of October 29, 2021: 2.6%
- 43 hospitalized

On October 1, 2021, Governor Newsom announced plans to add the COVID-19 vaccine to the list of vaccinations required to attend school in person when the vaccine receives full approval from the FDA for both middle and high school grades. Santa Barbara County Public Health is closely following and will provide updates when available. Additional information on the statewide vaccine requirement for schools can be found [here](#).

Background

Emergency Proclamations and Health Orders. Since March 4, 2020, there has been a number of emergency proclamations and health orders related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). These can be found at: <https://publichealthsb.org/health-officer-orders/>

On May 21, 2021, California announced the details of the state's full reopening plan "Beyond the Blueprint." Beginning June 15, 2021, businesses returned to usual operations with limited exceptions for mega events. Information on SBC's movement through California's colored tier system prior to the Beyond the Blueprint can be found in [Board Letter](#) from November 2, 2021. Employers are subject to the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS). Cal/OSHA Standards Board approved their updated ETS regulations on June 17, 2021. Cal/OSHA's ETS on vaccination and testing was officially filed in the Office of the Federal Register on November 4, 2021. The ETS requires employers of 100 employees or more to develop, implement, and enforce a mandatory vaccination policy with an exception for employers that instead establish, implement, and enforce a policy allowing employees to elect either to get vaccinated or to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing and wear a face covering at the workplace. More information on the Cal/OSHA ETS can be found [here](#).

County's response and objectives. The County developed a list of objectives in response to the public health emergency. The list of objectives can be found in [Board Letter](#) from May 4, 2021.

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. Additional information on the

vaccine distribution plan can be found [here](#). Mobile vaccination clinic information can be found at: <https://publichealthsb.org/vaccine/>.

On August 23, 2021, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first COVID-19 vaccine, known as the Pfizer vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 in individuals ages 16 years of age and older. Additional information on FDA approval can be found [here](#). On September 22, 2021, the FDA authorized the Booster Dose of the Pfizer vaccine to be administered at least six months after completion of the primary series for individuals ages 65 years of age and older, individuals 18 through 64 years of age at high risk of severe COVID-19; and individuals 18 through 64 years of age whose frequent institutional or occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2 puts them at high risk of serious complications of COVID-19 including severe COVID-19.

On November 2, 2021 the CDC endorsed [recommendations](#) that children ages 5 to 11 years old be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the Pfizer pediatric vaccine. This announcement follows the [FDA](#) authorization of the pediatric vaccine last week. This authorization will allow for approximately 42,00 children ages 5 through 11 to be eligible for vaccination in Santa Barbara County. More information from SBCPHD can be found [here](#).

County HR Vaccine and Testing Policy. In response to FDA approval of the vaccine, on August 31, 2021, the Board approved a [County HR policy](#) which requires all Santa Barbara County employees to get vaccinated or to get tested on a weekly basis for those unvaccinated. The HR policy requires all County workers to provide verification of vaccination status as of September 30, 2021. For testing requirements, effective October 1, 2021 all County workers who are not fully vaccinated are required to undergo weekly testing and provide proof of each result. The full policy and board letter can be found [here](#). HR continues to work with departments to implement an efficient ongoing testing process that complies with County Policy and State HOOs.

Emergency Operations Center. The EOC closed the call center operations on May 28, 2021 as a result of a significant decrease in call volume but stands ready to be reactivated if needed. While the COVID Code Compliance Task Force has not been reactivated, SBCPHD has reinstated the COVID-19 Complaint form with the issuance of the facial covering HOO. The complaint form can be found [here](#). The enforcement approach continues to be through education. Additional information on the EOC, including education and compliance, can be found in [Board Letter](#) from May 4, 2021.

County Department Operations. The County continues to encourage a hybrid approach with workplace flexibility to the degree feasible and depending on their populations served. Departments have been instructed to follow health safety protocols for COVID-19 for any employees on-site. County buildings reopened to the public on June 16, and Board of Supervisors meetings reopened to the public on July 13, 2021 for in person public participation. As of August 6, 2021, per SBCPHD HOO, facial coverings are required in all indoor County buildings and facilities, including for speakers during BOS meetings.

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 Blueprint for a Safer Economy. With the move to Beyond the Blueprint, on June 15, the RISE program ended. The County will continue to update the recoverybc.org site with resources for local businesses.

Response Costs and Funding. On March 6, 2021, the federal government approved an additional stimulus package for COVID-19 relief entitled the American Rescue Plan Act. Included in the \$1.9 trillion package was \$350 billion in direct funding to states, territories, tribes, counties and municipalities, \$10 billion for coronavirus capital projects, and \$1.5 billion over two years for revenue sharing counties. Santa Barbara County's direct allocation was approximately \$86.6 million. In addition to direct funding to local

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governments, the American Rescue Plan Act increased funding for various programs available for small businesses, created several new programs to aid small business, and provided various funding avenues for residents. County staff presented ARPA funding recommendations to the Board on October 19, 2021. Additional information on ARPA approved funding allocations can be found [here](#).

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

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

Authored by:

Jasmine McGinty, Principal Analyst, County Executive Office

Attachments

Attachment A – COVID19 Public Health Update Slides

Attachment B – COSB Workforce COVID-19 Testing Dashboard Slides (Human Resources Department)