



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: 10-12-2021
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
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: 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; 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 Text:

Staff will provide the most recent information on the status of COVID-19 at the Board of Supervisors' meeting. 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 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The SBCHOO was extended on September 5, 2021, effective at 5:00 P.M. to October 5, 2021 or until it is extended, rescinded, superseded or amended. Full HOO 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.

On September 28, 2021, Santa Barbara County Health Officials issues a social distancing recommendation in response to the passing of [AB 361](#). AB 361 relates to Brown Act meetings and the allowance of continued teleconference use for open public meetings. The health officer recommendation is intended to satisfy the requirement of the Brown Act which allows legislative bodies in the County to use certain available teleconferencing options set forth in the Brown Act. Further, the recommendation recommends social distancing measures to promote public participation while encouraging participants to protect themselves against COVID- 19. 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 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.

Timeline of Santa Barbara County Movement through the tiers:

- September 29, 2020: Tier 2 – Substantial/Red
- November 16, 2020: SBC reverted to Tier 1 – Widespread/ Purple
- December 6, 2020: 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.
- January 26, 2021: Tier 1 – Widespread/ Purple
- March 16, 2021: Tier 2 – Substantial/ Red
- April 21, 2021: Tier 3 – Moderate/ Orange
- June 8, 2021: Tier 4 – Minimal/ Yellow
- June 15, 2021: Beyond the Blueprint

COVID-19 vaccination is one of the most important tools to end the COVID-19 pandemic. As of September 26, 2021, 68.2% of eligible individuals in Santa Barbara County have been fully vaccinated, and 57.7% of all individuals in the county have been fully vaccinated. Daily case rate of unvaccinated versus vaccinated in Santa Barbara County is available on the [Public Health Community dashboard](#).

On August 31, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the County of Santa Barbara COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing 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 will require all County workers to

provide verification of vaccination status by September 30, 2021. For testing requirements, effective October 1, 2021 all County workers who are not fully vaccinated will be required to undergo weekly testing and provide proof of each result. Full policy and board letter 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." When California fully reopened the economy on June 15, 2021, the State moved into the "Beyond the Blueprint". Beginning June 15, 2021, businesses returned to usual operations with limited exceptions for mega events. Employers are still 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. Following the June 17 vote by the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board to adopt the revised COVID-19 Prevention ETS, Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order to allow the revisions to immediately take effect on June 17 including changes to face coverings and physical distancing requirements.

Following the State of California's Health Officer Order on facial coverings and testing in particular settings, SBCPHD issued a [Health Officer Order](#) mandating facial coverings in indoor settings countywide. This mandate became effective at 5:00 P.M. on August 6, 2021 and was since extended on September 5, 2021.

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 at publichealthsb.org. Santa Barbara County's vaccine eligibility is open to all residents ages 12 year of age and older. Minors are only eligible for the Pfizer vaccine. Santa Barbara County currently has community vaccination clinics where all Californians ages 12+ may be vaccinated. Santa Barbara County vaccination clinics are now accepting walk-ins for all who wish to receive the vaccine. 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](#). 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.

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.

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 and to the health care system. 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. Where in-person services had been suspended, County departments began resuming in-person, in-office contact, with some departments opting to continue by-appointment, virtual and other arrangements depending on their services and customers/clients. The County is encouraging 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 each Department has a reopening plan in place. The 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 recovery.sbc.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 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 will bring ARPA funding recommendations to the Board on October 19, 2021.

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:

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