



San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of December 15, 2020

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

FEDERAL UPDATE:

FDA Issues emergency use authorization for first COVID-19 vaccine

On December 11, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued the first emergency use authorization (EUA) for a vaccine for the prevention of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in individuals 16 years of age and older. The emergency use authorization allows the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to be distributed in the U.S.

The FDA has determined that Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine has met the statutory criteria for issuance of an EUA. The totality of the available data provides clear evidence that Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine may be effective in preventing COVID-19. The data also support that the known and potential benefits outweigh the known and potential risks, supporting the vaccine's use in millions of people 16 years of age and older, including healthy individuals. In making this determination, the FDA can assure the public and medical community that it has conducted a thorough evaluation of the available safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality information

A safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is the most important intervention to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the decisions regarding the distribution are being driven by the state and federal government, including the amount of vaccine a county will receive, when, and how. Vaccine prioritization and allocation is dependent on the decisions and timeline of the state and federal government.

San Francisco will be provided approximately 12,000 doses in the first round of allocation by the state and federal government. San Francisco Department of Health anticipates the first doses could arrive as early as December 14.

The current proposal for Phase One distribution, which determined by the state prioritization plan, is currently targeted to front line health care workers and nursing homes. Nursing home residents are more likely to get severely ill or die from COVID-19, and workers in our health systems need to stay healthy to care for others who may become sick.

We are bound by the state prioritization plan. The state's allocation plan is based on a phased approach while the vaccine doses are in limited supply. Once vaccine supply has increased, the vaccine will be available to a broader segment of the population. The general population will not



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likely have access until the vaccine supply is no longer limited – expected to be a Summer or early Fall 2021.

The distribution of a national vaccine during a pandemic is an unprecedented event. San Francisco is planning with all our partners to ensure the safe delivery of vaccines.

STATE UPDATE:

Governor Newsom taps SF Health Officer Dr. Tomás Aragón to lead California DPH

On December 7, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the decision to appoint Dr. Tomás Aragón as Director of the California Department of Public Health. This position requires Senate confirmation. Dr. Aragón has been Health Officer for the City and County of San Francisco and Director of the Population Health Division for the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) since 2011. He has been Volunteer Faculty for the University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health since 2004. He earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from Harvard Medical School, a Doctor of Public Health Degree from the University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health and a Master of Public Health degree from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. Aragón's appointment comes at a critical moment in our COVID-19 response. The SFDPH team is so proud to see the governor recognizing what we in SFDPH have known since 1996, that Dr. Aragón is an exceptional public health leader, professor, doctor and Californian who will always put equity first. We have seen firsthand how Dr. Aragón leads with humility, curiosity and compassion – qualities that have served us well for decades, but never so much as in the COVID-19 pandemic. His steady, thoughtful approach in San Francisco's emergency response has saved lives, especially in our City's vulnerable populations, and has garnered praise from around the world.

LOCAL UPDATE:

San Francisco to join Bay Area counties to preemptively adopt California's regional stay at home order in an effort to contain COVID-19 surge

Today, there are over 18,500 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 167 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

On December 4, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced San Francisco will join counties across the Bay Area to impose significant restrictions across the region in an effort to mitigate the current surge in COVID-19 cases. The City's case rate and hospitalizations continue to increase unabated since late October and are now prompting San Francisco to take further action.



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San Francisco and many other Bay Area Counties are opting into the Regional Stay at Home Order that Governor Newsom announced Thursday, December 3rd for regions with less than 15% capacity in ICU beds. Although San Francisco and the Bay Area have not yet met that threshold, the City in partnership with Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Clara and City of Berkeley, is preemptively implementing these restrictions in an effort to flatten the curve of COVID-19 cases, which continue to surge, and prevent hospitals from being overrun across the region.

Please visit <https://sf.gov/news/updates-regional-stay-home-order> to review how San Francisco implemented the [Bay Area Regional Stay Home Order](#). Closures include in-person dining, personal care services, indoor gyms, museums, and drive-in movies.

San Francisco, along with California and the United States, is experiencing a surge in COVID-19 more aggressive than what the City has experienced to date. Local COVID-19 cases have quadrupled during the last month. San Francisco is currently averaging 142 new COVID-19 positive cases per day compared to the 34 per day that it averaged in late October. Moreover, the City currently has approximately 900 COVID-19 cases diagnosed per week and hospitalizations have tripled over the last month. As a result, the City's hospital capacity will be under considerable stress. At its current rate of COVID hospitalizations, the City would run out of hospital beds by the end of December. Unlike in previous surges, the rest of the State's hospital capacity is strained and reaching patient limits and it is unlikely there will be additional hospital capacity in other counties if San Francisco's is compromised.

San Francisco's Health Order is expected to be in effect through January 4, 2021. If, after a week of this order being in effect, the City's indicators show a consistent reduction in case rates and hospitalizations for three additional weeks (for a total of 4 weeks) and ICU capacity is holding at 25% availability or more, San Francisco will lift this health order. If however, the Bay Area continues on its current trajectory and reaches the 15% ICU capacity threshold, it would trigger the State's Regional Stay at Home Order and mandate that the region continue these restrictions for at least 3 weeks from that time and until ICU capacity exceeds 15% and forward-looking indicators would allow easing the restrictions. In either scenario, once this order is lifted, San Francisco would be returned to the State's blueprint tier system.

In addition to the measures the City is taking in order to reduce close interactions by people from different households, the City is increasing its focus on compliance and enforcement activities. For example, the City's Community Education and Response Team (CERT) is addressing complaints regarding Health Order violations to ensure that business owners and operators are fully aware of and adhere to health orders and directives. Further, with expanding contact tracing capabilities and infection monitoring efforts, CERT is strategically focusing its proactive outreach and education efforts to business corridors in areas of the City with high infection rates, low compliance, and/or elevated risks.



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SF Department of Public Health funds \$5.25m in grants for COVID-19 community response

On December 11, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, in partnership with the San Francisco Public Health Foundation, announced the results of a \$5.25 million grant program to provide culturally responsive services to neighborhoods and populations most impacted by COVID-19. Ten Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and their partners will be funded for COVID-19 community prevention, mitigation, and wellness programs. Funded activities include focused outreach, mobile test site support, case investigation and contact tracing (CI/CT), community care for COVID-19 positive individuals, and the development of a community-based CI/CT training center.

During this pandemic, CBOs have supported San Francisco's most vulnerable communities. SFDPH values the expertise of these organizations, as they are rooted in the community and know how to best serve the diverse populations in the City. Trust is crucial to effective COVID-19 outreach, care, and prevention services and to address stigma.

This funding program is part of SFDPH's equity strategy to focus on populations and neighborhoods that have the greatest disparities in COVID-19 case rates, with a goal of preventing and decreasing the transmission and severity of the disease. The two service categories funded include I) Community Outreach and Care and II) Community Case Investigation/Contact Tracing (CI/CT) Training Center.

The Community Outreach and Care Teams will use a person-centered, culturally and linguistically competent approach to provide harm reduction-based, low barrier, wrap-around services within their

This \$5.25 million community grant is part of SFDPH's and the City's larger COVID-19 response investments which include: health operations; housing and shelter programs; food insecurity and human services; and emergency communications and operations. In September 2020, Mayor Breed announced \$28.5 million to support COVID-19 community response efforts for San Francisco's Latino population across multiple areas. This grant will fulfill a portion of that allocation, given that the Latino community represents 45% of current COVID-19 cases.

City of SF and community organizations hosted holiday giveaway for 5,000 families and residents

On December 9, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, in partnership with the San Francisco African American Faith-Based Coalition and with support from the COVID Command Center, and other local community-based organizations, hosted a holiday giveaway event at the Cow Palace, called "Feeding 5000," to provide holiday resources to some of San Francisco's most vulnerable residents. The event, supported by major contributors from Salesforce, Five-Point, Hellman Foundation, and the Cow Palace, distributed turkeys and trimming bags, gift cards, culturally-appropriate foods, and other resources to community and faith-based organizations to deliver to more than 5,000 families and residents living in San Francisco. Items were distributed via a drive-through service with strict COVID-19 safety procedures in place.



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Partners included the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank, Pacific Agri-Products, Earl's Organic Produce, SF Market, SF New Deal, and Dixon Delights; all of which are local nonprofit organizations that have been instrumental in addressing food insecurity during the pandemic.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, one in four San Francisco residents were at risk of hunger due to low income. With the increased number of residents out of work, the number of people struggling to afford enough nutritious food is also increasing and the City's nonprofit partners have reported a surge in demand for food.

Focusing on serving those most vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19, addressing food insecurity and expanding food access has been a critical objective of the City's COVID Command Center over the past several months. The City has led a major expansion of food security programs to ensure all residents have access to food in this time of great need and economic uncertainty. This effort was made possible by the City's partnerships with a diverse network of private and community-run organizations who work tirelessly to provide food to the community, such as the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank, the San Francisco Unified School District, and multiple local nonprofits.

City community mobile testing sites in partnership with community-based organizations, test over 10,000 people

As of December, the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the COVID Command Center, in partnership with the Latino Task Force and Excelsior Strong collaborative, tested over 10,000 people and vaccinated 554 individuals with flu shots, at the mobile COVID-19 testing sites at the Mission HUB (701 Alabama) and Excelsior District site (Crocker Amazon. These community led sites focus on serving the Latinx community's essential workers, uninsured, and families impacted by COVID19 always put families first. With support from DPH both sites are set to launch the community-based organizations' Community Wellness Teams who will provide wrap around support for Latinx and anyone testing COVID19 positive at these sites. This successful partnership, with the Latinx community, highlights the value of trusting the leadership and wisdom that community brings to our work during this difficult time. Since July 2020, Isela Ford, Latinx Lead for SFDPH and CCC and Oscar Macias, Latinx Liaison for CCC Community Branch have facilitated the coordination between the City and community partners.

San Francisco's new street crisis response team launches

On November 30, Mayor London N. Breed announced the launch of the first phase of San Francisco's Street Crisis Response Team (SCRT) pilot program. The first team will begin responding to 911 calls regarding people experiencing behavioral health crises today. The Street Crisis Response Team is part of San Francisco's efforts to develop alternatives to police responses to



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non-violent calls, which advances the Mayor's roadmap to fundamentally change the way that the City handles public safety, and is also a major step in implementing Mental Health SF.

The SCRT pilot program is a collaboration between the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the San Francisco Fire Department with significant support from the Department of Emergency Management. The San Francisco Police Department will also be a key partner in the transition of certain types of 911 calls to the new teams. Each team includes a community paramedic, a behavioral health clinician, and a behavioral health peer specialist. The goal of the new program is to provide an appropriate non-law enforcement response to behavioral health emergencies in San Francisco and divert individuals in crisis away from emergency rooms and criminal legal settings into behavioral health treatment. The SCRT aims to provide trauma-informed clinical interventions and care coordination for people who experience behavioral health crises on the streets of San Francisco.

Starting November 30, this first team will focus on responding to calls in the Tenderloin, which will allow the SCRT to respond efficiently to calls in a high-need and relatively small geographic area during the initial phase of the program. Additional teams will be phased in over the coming weeks and months, ramping up to at least six teams by the end of March 2021, with the goal of enabling the SCRT to operate citywide, 7 days per week and up to 24 hours a day.

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