



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of November 17, 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>

NATIONAL UPDATE:

US Supreme Court Begins Consideration of Case on the Affordable Care Act's Constitutionality

The Affordable Care Act's (ACA) future remains uncertain as the US Supreme Court began hearing oral arguments on November 10, 2020 in *California v. Texas*, a court case concerning the constitutionality of the individual mandate, and possibly the entire ACA. In 2017, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) eliminated the financial penalty for Americans without health coverage which was required under the ACA's individual mandate. In 2018, the judge in *Texas v. United States* ruled that the individual mandate was now unconstitutional since it no longer "produces at least some revenue" for the federal government and could not stand as a tax, as the US Supreme Court ruled it was in 2012. The judge in *Texas v. United States* further ruled that the individual mandate is so essential to the ACA that it cannot be severed from the rest of the law, which would mean the entire ACA should be struck down.

As a result of efforts by California, 17 other states and the US House of Representatives, the US Supreme Court agreed to review an appeal of the judge's ruling in *Texas v. United States* in the current case, *California v. Texas*. While the ACA remains in effect until the Court makes its ruling, if all or most of the law ultimately is struck down, it may result in far-reaching consequences for the nation's health care system and impact nearly everyone to some degree. Many significant ACA provisions could be eliminated, including:

- protections for people with pre-existing conditions
- cost-sharing protections
- expanded eligibility for Medicaid
- essential health benefits, including coverage of preventive care with no patient cost-sharing
- premium subsidies to make individual health insurance more affordable
- coverage of young adults up to age 26 under their parents' insurance policies
- closing of the doughnut hole under Medicare's drug benefit

The Department and City will continue to monitor this case and potential impacts for the City and County of San Francisco.



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LOCAL UPDATE:

San Francisco to adjust its businesses reopening as COVID-19 case rates increase

Today, there are over 13,700 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 156 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

On November 10, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced the City will adjust its reopening due to a significant and rapid increase in COVID-19 case rates in San Francisco, coupled with the current increase in cases and hospitalizations in California and across the United States. San Francisco will temporarily roll back the reopening of indoor dining and will reduce the capacity of fitness centers and movie theaters. Additionally, San Francisco will pause the reopening of indoor instruction at high schools that have not already opened. These changes went into effect at 11:59 pm on Friday, November 13, 2020.

San Francisco is rolling back these activities in an effort to contain the spread of the virus by focusing on higher risk indoor activities and other behaviors that increase the concentration of aerosols. The Department of Public Health will continue to closely monitor the City's case count, infection rate, and hospitalization rate in order to determine how quickly we can flatten the curve and determine when we can resume safe reopening.

Since October 2, San Francisco has experienced a 250% increase in COVID-19 cases. The rolling back of certain businesses and activities is necessary to mitigate the aggressive growth of the virus that would cost lives and threaten the capacity of our health care system. This step is aimed to minimize the activities that are known to be of higher risk for increasing the spread of the virus – particularly indoor activities, high traffic activities, and those that allow for mask removal or increase the production of aerosols, such as physical activity and eating. San Francisco is reducing the capacity at which fitness centers and movie theaters are allowed to operate. Indoor dining will need to close at this time. High schools that have not yet opened will remain closed for any indoor instruction, though DPH will work with high schools that want to reopen educational programming in an outdoor setting.

One of the [key indicators](#) of COVID-19 prevalence in the city, the number of new cases per day per 100,000 people, has more than doubled over the last three weeks from a low of 3.7 cases per 100,000 people to 9 cases per 100,000 people. The rate of increase in hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients is also a key indicator that affects the pace of reopening. San Francisco recently hit a low of 21 people in the hospital with COVID, but expects that number will increase in the coming weeks.

DPH will continue to monitor the City's COVID-19 Key Public Health Indicators and other information to determine whether the infection rate is stabilizing and when the City can resume reopening.



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The following activities will halt indoor operations until further notice:

- Indoor dining at restaurants or bars serving meals in any context including standalone restaurants, food courts in shopping centers, and dining establishments in hotels, museums or other venues.

The following activities will pause until further notice:

- High schools that are not already open with approved plans. (Switching to outdoor instruction within certain parameters).

The following activities will be required to reduce capacity to a maximum of 50 people indoors:

- Fitness centers may remain open to the lesser of 25% capacity or 50 people (down from 100).
- Movie theaters may remain open to the lesser of 25% capacity or 50 people (down from 100).

All other businesses and activities that are currently allowed may continue operating at this time, including outdoor dining and take-out, elementary and middle schools, offices, retail shopping, personal services, and cultural and family activities such as museums and aquariums.

San Francisco is taking this action in order to prevent further rollbacks of businesses and activities that have reopened and to support elementary and middle schools, community hubs and other learning and development activities to continue to open as safely as possible.

San Francisco's increase in cases is significant but not unique. California has seen a 29% increase in new positive cases over the last week and many counties have been re-assigned to more restrictive tiers on the State's system. Other Bay Area counties, such as Contra Costa, are also seeing a significant increase in cases and have started considering similar measures to curtail activities in order to slow the spread of the virus, despite what they are allowed by the State.

DPH will monitor the Health Indicators, the risk of specific activities, the estimated reproductive rate of the virus, the regional data and the State's actions in determining when and how to move forward, pause, or dial back reopening.

Chinese Community Pop up Testing Site Reports

On Friday, October 30, SFDPH and COVID Command Center, in partnership with Chinese Hospital and community-based organizations, hosted the first City-sponsored free pop-up mobile test site at Portsmouth Square in Chinatown and tested a total of 392 people. The majority of tests were administered to members of the API community. Of the 392 tests conducted, all were negative for the COVID-19 virus. In addition, on October 27, SFDPH also tested 124 people in the Portola



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District at 25 Felton Street. All those tested were also negative for the COVID-19 virus. We want to thank the API community for their diligence and practicing the safety precautions to protect themselves and the community.

Moreover, we are grateful for our community partners' collaboration, especially Chinese Hospital, Chinatown Community Development Center, Self Help for the Elderly, Chinese Six Companies, Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Gum Moon Women's Resource Center, NICOS, Chinese Newcomers Services Center, Chinatown YMCA, Community Youth Center for the 10/30 Chinatown pop-up testing site, and to NEMS for the Portola pop-up testing site.

The free mobile pop-up testing sites took place again:

- Wednesday, November 4, 9-4pm – 1601 Geary Blvd, Japantown Peace Plaza
- Friday, November 6, 9-4pm – Portsmouth Square
- Tuesday, November 10, 9-5pm – 25 Felton Street, Portola District

We must stay vigilant and continue to keep the virus out of our community. We are seeing a surge across the nation and state and San Francisco is showing an increase in cases. Testing is a part of the response, but we must also focus on prevention. San Franciscans need to continue masking and face covering, continue social distancing, and frequently washing your hands. All these behaviors will help slow the spread of the virus.

City Mobile COVID-19 Testing Sites to Offer Free Low Barrier Flu Vaccines

SFDPH and COVID Command Center began making low barrier flu vaccines available at mobile testing sites, in partnership with community partners, to supplement flu vaccine access gaps beginning November 2. The testing sites include the Excelsior site beginning today, November 2; the Mission hub beginning on Thursday, November 5; and the Ocean View-Merced Heights-Ingleside (OMI) site beginning on Friday, November 6.

In addition to offering flu vaccines at community mobile testing sites, DPH San Francisco Health Network clinics are offering many flu vaccination opportunities for vulnerable and uninsured San Francisco residents as a part of the larger effort to get more people vaccinated this flu season.

DPH strongly recommends that every individual ages six months and older to receive a vaccination for influenza. With COVID-19 and the upcoming flu season overlapping, health officials say it is more important than ever to get vaccinated against influenza this year. The flu vaccine protects everyone's health. When you are vaccinated against flu, you protect yourself and lower the chances of infecting others, including people at high risk of developing potentially serious flu complications.

The flu vaccine provides protection starting about two weeks after receiving the vaccine – the time



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needed for your body to develop the antibodies that protect you. The flu season generally starts in November, peaks in December through February, and remains through April. While the season has already begun this year, it is not too late to get the flu shot. It is best to get it whenever you can to protect yourself during the rest of the flu season.

For those with insurance, a flu vaccine is widely available without cost to the patient as a preventive service from their regular doctor or most pharmacies. Call your doctor, clinic or pharmacy to schedule your flu shot in advance. To find a flu vaccine at a location near you, visit the Vaccine Finder at vaccinefinder.org.

SFDPH plans to continue its vaccination efforts through existing sites and new flu vaccination sites throughout the 2020-2021 flu season. For more information about flu shots, visit sf.gov/flu-shots.

In addition to protecting yourself with a flu vaccine this year, keep your family and community healthy by:

- washing your hands often and thoroughly with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- wearing a face covering and practicing social distancing.
- covering your cough and sneezes with your elbow or arm.
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- staying home when you are sick.

San Francisco Department of Public Health Awarded Grant for Vision Zero Education and Outreach with People with Disabilities and Multilingual Residents

On November 11, SFDPH announced that it has received a \$100,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). This grant will aim to increase safety for some of the city's most vulnerable residents who walk and bike in the coming year. San Francisco's [Vision Zero SF](#) – a City initiative to build better and safer streets with the goal to eliminate traffic fatalities – will use grant funds to focus on community outreach to multi-lingual communities and people with disabilities, as well as service providers.

SFDPH co-chairs San Francisco's Vision Zero Task Force with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. Pedestrians accounted for 62% of the 29 traffic deaths in 2019 with 1 person killed while biking. Educational efforts funded by the OTS grant will leverage the ongoing Vision Zero SF partnerships and activities to promote safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers, with more targeted outreach to vulnerable communities.

Grant funds will be used for a variety of activities promoting bicyclist and pedestrian safety:



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- Collaborating with community-based organizations and health care providers to promote walking and biking to people with disabilities and multi-lingual residents.
- Developing traffic safety educational materials.
- Education workshops geared toward youth and older adults.
- Community outreach events, including traffic safety fairs, community events, and Open Streets events.

The grant program runs from Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2021. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

California Home Visiting Program Innovation Grant Award

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Division, California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) released a Request for Supplemental Information (RSI) for home visiting services with an annual fiscal year basis, up to \$5 million in State General Fund and a maximum award of \$1 million per fiscal year.

MCAH Field Public Health Nurse Home Visiting Program is leading a regional Trauma Informed Approach- Public Health Nursing (TIA-PHN), innovative practice along with Sonoma and Napa County Field PHN programs (San Francisco Consortium) with an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) intervention as a primary intervention strategy for families from pregnancy through kindergarten. The TIA-PHN model will address the unique needs of families where children are most likely to encounter toxic stress leading to suboptimal brain development and future poor health outcomes. This model design incorporates ACE education in a self-reflective approach with parents to increase family resilience and reduce the risk for future childhood trauma.

The San Francisco Home Visiting Consortium's trauma-informed approach serves pregnant women and or/families with children up to age 5 years old, who screen positive for one or more of the following risk factors: 1) current homelessness/housing insecurity; 2) past or current substance use; 3) past or current intimate partner violence; 4) past or current mental health concerns; and/ or 5) medical fragility (complex medical needs requiring nurse case management). Many families within this target population would be excluded from the multiple positive benefits provided by home visiting services because of ineligibility or difficulty adhering to program requirements and this is why the Field PHN Home Visiting program was selected as primary program for implementation of the model.



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MCAH and UCSF Host Special Needs Dental Care Summit

Across California, lack of access to dental care is a health crisis for children and adults with special health needs. And, despite having two world renowned Dental universities, San Francisco is no exception. The SFDPH division of Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) has made improving access to Special Needs Dentistry a priority goal and, in February 2020, our CCS Medical Director, Dr. Ben Meisel, worked with UCSF School of Dentistry to bring critical state and national stakeholders together for a Special Needs Dentistry Summit aimed at kicking off the collective impact efforts necessary to successfully address this problematic health inequity. Congratulations to MCAH on leading in this effort. A synopsis of the Special Needs Dentistry Summit can be viewed [here](#).

Bill Blum, Director of HIV Health Services, Elected as the Chair of the Communities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief (CAEAR) Coalition

Bill Blum, Director of HIV Health Services, a unit of Ambulatory Care, was elected as the Chair of the Communities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief (CAEAR) Coalition. Formed in 1991, CAEAR Coalition is the oldest national organization with a primary focus on the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Program. CAEAR Coalition is a membership organization which advocates for federal policy, legislation, regulations, and appropriations to serve the Part A, Part C, Ending the HIV Epidemic (ETE) and AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). CAEAR Coalition responds to community mandates to meet the care, treatment, supportive, and prevention service needs of people living with HIV/AIDS and the organizations that serve them.



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DPH in the News

SF News, Nov 15 2020, SFPD announces Narcan a success for the community

<https://www.thesfnews.com/sfpd-announces-narcan-a-success-for-the-community/70490>

Bay City News, Nov 14 2020, SF police say they've used Narcan to save nearly 150 people from opioid overdose

<https://sfbayca.com/2020/11/14/sf-police-say-theyve-used-narcan-to-save-nearly-150-people-from-opioid-overdose/>

ABC7, Nov 13 2020, EXCLUSIVE: Bay Area residents get injected for AstraZeneca's phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine trial

<https://abc7news.com/health/exclusive-inside-astrazenecas-phase-3-covid-19-vaccine-trial/7942856/>

KPIX, Nov 13 2020, 2 mystery assault victims at San Francisco General Hospital; help sought in identifying patients

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/11/13/san-francisco-general-needs-help-identifying-patient/>

SF Examiner, Nov 13 2020, As COVID spikes, neighborhood testing sites near capacity

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/news-columnists/as-covid-spikes-neighborhood-testing-sites-near-capacity/>

ABC News, Nov 12 2020, How sending mental health responders instead of police could save Black lives

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/sending-mental-health-responders-police-save-black-lives/story?id=74210488>

KALW SF Public Radio, Nov 12 2020, San Francisco to halt indoor dining Friday

<https://www.kalw.org/post/san-francisco-halt-indoor-dining-friday#stream/0>

Lake County Record, Nov 12 2020, Coronavirus: California's cases, hospitalizations continue to rise

<https://www.record-bee.com/2020/11/12/coronavirus-californias-cases-hospitalizations-continue-to-rise/>

SF Examiner, Nov 12 2020, SF may prohibit people from smoking in their apartments

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/sf-may-prohibit-people-from-smoking-in-their-apartments/>

SF Gate, Nov 12 2020, These 11 San Francisco businesses repeatedly broke public health order

<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/San-Francisco-businesses-bars-violate-health-order-15723862.php>



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ABC7, Nov 11 2020, San Francisco temporarily shut down 11 bars since March due to repeated COVID-19 health order violations, officials say

<https://abc7news.com/san-francisco-bar-shutdown-sf-covid-rollback-coronavirus-covid19/7877455/>

LA Times, Nov 11 2020, San Francisco, long hailed for beating COVID-19, now faces a spike in cases

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-11-11/san-francisco-has-been-remarkable-conservative-in-fighting-covid-19-will-it-keep-working>

SFist, Nov 11 2020, SF restaurants face grim winter with no indoor seats; some say city should make exceptions for those being extra-safe

<https://sfist.com/2020/11/11/sf-restaurants-face-grim-winter-with-no-indoor-seats-some-say-city-should-make-exceptions-for-those-being-extra-safe/>

Mission Local, Nov 10 2020, As COVID-19 cases climb 250% since early October, SF halts indoor dining

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/11/as-cases-increase-by-250-percent-since-early-october-the-city-halts-indoor-dining-and-other-activities/>

SF Business Times, Nov 10 2020, 'Potentially explosive' case surge leads S.F. to roll back indoor dining, other activities

<https://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/news/2020/11/10/case-surge-indoor-dining-movies-gyms-rollback.html>

SF Chronicle, Nov 10 2020, San Francisco has handled the coronavirus pandemic well: But at what cost?

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/San-Francisco-has-handled-the-coronavirus-15711673.php>

SF Chronicle, Nov 10 2020, San Francisco pauses indoor dining and school reopenings. Contra Costa, Santa Cruz counties slide backward to more restrictive tiers

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Contra-Costa-Santa-Cruz-counties-move-back-on-15716877.php>

Bloomberg News, Nov 9 2020, San Francisco pares reopening; Newark curfews: virus update

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-09/vaccine-study-spurs-hope-u-s-cases-at-10-million-virus-update>

SFist, Nov 9 2020, Pandemic updates: Hospitalizations return to mid-September levels; Santa Clara County warns of surge

<https://sfist.com/2020/11/09/pandemic-updates-hospitalizations-return-to-mid-september-levels/>



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KPIX, Nov 6 2020, Holiday air travelers brace for possible quarantine, additional COVID precautions

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/11/06/holiday-air-travelers-brace-for-possible-quarantine-additional-covid-precautions/>

Mission Local, Nov 6 2020, Contact tracing asymptomatic people helped identify more Covid-19 cases, SF Public Health Department research shows

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/11/contact-tracing-asymptomatic-people-helped-identify-more-covid-19-cases-sf-public-health-department-research-shows/>

SFist, Nov 5 2020, Bay Area may tell inbound travelers to quarantine for 14 days

<https://sfist.com/2020/11/05/bay-area-may-tell-inbound-travelers-to-quarantine-for-14-days/>