



## 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 October 6, 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>

#### **STATE UPDATE:**

##### **State officials announce equity metric to more effectively fight COVID-19**

On September 30, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released the details regarding a [health equity metric](#) to help guide counties in their continuing efforts to more effectively fight COVID-19. It requires more intensive efforts to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among Californians who have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic. The equity metric, which is part of the Blueprint for a Safer Economy announced on August 28, is designed to reduce COVID-19 cases in all communities and takes effect on October 6.

Under the state's [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#), a county will need to meet an equity metric and/or demonstrate targeted investments to eliminate disparities in levels of COVID-19 transmission to advance to the next, less restrictive tier. Counties with a population of greater than 106,000 people must ensure the test positivity rates in its most disadvantaged neighborhoods do not significantly fall behind its overall county test positivity rate and submit a plan that defines its disproportionately impacted populations, specifies the percent of COVID-19 cases in these populations, and outlines plans to invest funding to interrupt disease transmission in these communities. In addition, counties with demonstrated declining case rates and test positivity rates for both the countywide and its most disadvantaged neighborhoods that fall into two tiers below their current tier may advance to the next, less restrictive tier.

San Francisco welcomes the state's new equity metric that mirrors our City's priority of ensuring that in the fight against COVID-19, no community is left behind. As we have seen in San Francisco and across the state, this virus exploits historic inequities and structural racism. This is why San Francisco has made significant investments in an equitable emergency response including being one of the first cities in the nation to offer free low-barrier testing, free isolation and quarantine accommodations, an aggressive outbreak management program for vulnerable communities, and mobile community testing that follows the virus to communities with the highest rates of COVID-19, among others.

On Sept. 29, the state assigned San Francisco to the orange tier for reopening. All counties remain in a newly assigned tier for a minimum of three weeks. We have confidence in San Francisco's ability to meet the new equity metric when our tier status is reevaluated.

##### **Governor Newsom signs legislation to mitigate closures of Adult Residential Facilities**

On September 25, Governor Gavin Newsom signed [AB 2377](#), legislation authored by



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Assemblymember Chiu and sponsored by the City and County of San Francisco and Department of Public Health. AB 2377 will require Adult Residential Facilities (ARFs) owners to give residents more time and assistance with relocation in the event of a facility closure. Adult Residential Facilities house and provide 24/7 services to individuals ages 18-59, who are not able to live independently due to serious mental illness or other chronic conditions. Specifically, the law requires 180 days of notice prior to a closure and a personalized patient relocation and closure plan. The law also allows local governments the first opportunity to purchase ARFs and use all state, federal and local sources of mental health and homelessness prevention funds to buy and operate ARFs. In San Francisco, ARFs play an integral role housing some of our most vulnerable residents, and they are closing at an alarming rate with San Francisco losing 43 facilities representing 243 beds between 2012 and 2019. Given the state's housing crisis and the vulnerable nature of the population served by ARFs, these residents are more likely to experience homelessness once a facility closes. Giving local governments the first right to purchase may help prevent these critical sources of care from closing and leaving residents potentially unhoused. AB 2377 will take effect January 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **LOCAL UPDATE:**

#### **San Francisco Department of Public Health Fiscal Year 20-21 and 21-22 budget is adopted**

The Board of Supervisors approved the FY 2021-2020 and FY 2021-2022 budget on September 29 and it was signed into law by the Mayor shortly thereafter. We are pleased to report that there were no further changes to the budget since we reported to the Commission in early September. We are grateful for the support we have received from the Mayor and Board of Supervisors and thank all the staff members within the San Francisco Department of Public Health and in the Mayor, Board of Supervisors and Controller's Office for supporting one of the most complex budgets the City has seen in recent years.

#### **Mayor Breed announces over \$28 million in expanded COVID-19 support for San Francisco's Latino community**

On September 24, Mayor London N. Breed announced expanded COVID-related support for the Latino community, which has been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. This new support comes after working with the community, including the Latino Parity and Equity Coalition and Latino Task Force for COVID 19. This \$28.5 million commitment will begin with an initial funding of \$22.5 million to support the Latino community that will come through a variety of solutions, with focuses on health, housing, food access, workforce, and small businesses. The City will continue to leverage public and private sources to meet the remaining need. This effort was led by the Department of Public Health (DPH) in partnership with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development. DPH funds will support increased prevention efforts, low-barrier testing, contact tracing, and behavioral health and primary care.



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Throughout California, Latinos are a disproportionately affected by COVID 19, making up 61% of cases. Latinos make up 50% percent of reported cases of COVID-19 in San Francisco, despite the demographic making up just 15% of the City's population, according to the Department of Public Health.

The disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on the Latino community can be attributed to persistent and systemic socioeconomic disparities, which are a result of systemic racism, structural violence, economic exclusion, and the housing crisis.

In San Francisco, nearly half of isolation and quarantine hotels have been occupied by persons who identify as Latino. With regards to contact tracing, in the month of August, 1,296 of the Latino cases were contacted, and 54% of those contacts notified were tested. At our Alternative Testing Sites, nearly 50% of those tested have identified as Latino, with a positivity rate of 13%. We continue to work to increase access to testing.

To ensure a coordinated and sustained collective response to COVID-19, including increasing access to testing, DPH is working closely with Latino community partners, including weekly meetings focused on engaging and collaborating to further build strategy, resources and capacity.

### **San Francisco to move forward with reopening more businesses and activities on September 30**

Today, there are over 11,480 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 108 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

On September 29, Mayor London N. Breed, Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax, and Assessor-Recorder Carmen Chu, co-Chair of the City's Economic Recovery Task Force, announced San Francisco will move forward with indoor dining and places of worship at 25% capacity up to 100 people starting on Wednesday, September 30. In addition, San Francisco will expand the capacity of outdoor places of worship, outdoor political demonstrations, and indoor malls, and will reopen additional family entertainment, hotel fitness centers, and more. These next steps come as the State assigned San Francisco to Orange on its tiered reopening system, based on San Francisco's COVID-19 infection and case rate. Reopening will create more potential opportunities for the virus to spread; therefore it is important that all San Franciscans take precautions to slow the spread of the virus.

San Francisco has also set a timeline for opening indoor movie theaters and outdoor playgrounds. Indoor movie theaters are slated to reopen at a limited capacity and with modifications on Wednesday, October 7, and public outdoor playgrounds are planned to open in mid-October, now that State restrictions have eased.



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On September 30, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) issued final health and safety guidelines for indoor dining, places of worship, and other activities to ensure the safest reopening possible. On Thursday, September 24, the Department of Public Health provided restaurants and places of worship with preliminary guidance to safely reopen with limited capacity and other modifications in place. The reopening of businesses and activities will increase travel and interaction throughout the city, which means increasing community spread of the virus and an increase in cases. Public health officials will regularly assess the [Key Public Health Indicators](#), particularly new positive case counts and hospitalizations to ensure San Francisco has the necessary resources available for those who contract COVID-19. As people start to move about the City more and increase activities, San Francisco will likely experience increases in cases and hospitalizations.

While San Francisco recognizes the State's thresholds, the City will continue on a reopening path based on its local health indicators and unique challenges and successes of our local reopening. San Francisco's reopening plan is available online at [sf.gov/reopening](https://sf.gov/reopening). Reopening is dependent upon San Francisco's Health indicators remaining stable or improving, and the plan is subject to change. Although additional indoor activities are being allowed, it is important to remember that outdoor options remain safer. Seniors and those with COVID-19 risk factors should avoid indoor crowds. All San Franciscans must do their part to limit the spread of COVID-19, including face masking, social distancing, and handwashing.

### Indoor Dining

Starting on Wednesday, September 30, restaurants and bars serving meals can reopen for indoor dining at 25% capacity, up to 100 people. Safety requirements for indoor dining are similar to the existing guidelines for outdoor dining. Face coverings must be worn by personnel and patrons at all times except when the patron is eating or drinking. That includes customers wearing a face covering when ordering, waiting for their order to arrive, or anytime staff is at their table. Restaurants are encouraged to use reservations to help ensure compliance with capacity limits. Under the new health guidance, restaurants must conduct a health check of patrons before they are seated. The health check requirement applies to both indoor and outdoor dining. Additional requirements and guidelines are available online [here](#).

### Places of Worship

Starting on Wednesday, September 30, places of worship can open indoors at 25% capacity, up to 100 people. Outdoor worship services will continue, now with up to 200 people, as long as there is sufficient space to allow for social distancing. Singing or chanting is not allowed indoors since choirs and singing indoors is a known source of COVID-19 spread. The place of worship must conduct a health check of patrons before they enter the facility. Face coverings are required at all times except for brief removal to consume food or drink if it is essential to a ritual or ceremony. Additional requirements and guidelines are available online [here](#).

### Additional Activities Resuming September 30



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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Mayor

In addition to indoor dining and places of worship, San Francisco is moving forward on reopening or expanding the following activities on September 30.

- Outdoor political demonstrations may continue, now with up to 200 people, as long as there is sufficient space to allow for social distancing and everyone wears a face covering.
- Indoor classes for higher education and vocational programs that require specialized equipment that cannot move outside are allowed with modifications and capacity limits in place.
- Some additional family entertainment, including outdoor children's carousels, miniature trains, and Ferris wheels, like the Observation Wheel in Golden Gate Park, with specified safety precautions.
  - The Observation Wheel is currently under construction and is expected to open by the end of October.
- Fitness centers located within hotels and lodging establishments up to 10% capacity with staff monitoring.
- Indoor shopping centers and malls with 50% capacity, upon approval of an updated health and safety plan.
  - Indoor food courts may reopen following guidelines for indoor dining.

### GOAL: early October - Indoor Movie Theaters and Outdoor Playgrounds

- The Department of Public Health plans to issue directives and guidance to allow indoor movie theaters to open on October 7, if San Francisco remains assigned to the Orange tier. At that time, movie theaters can reopen with 25% capacity up to 100 people, and with no concessions sold, or outside food or drink consumed.
- Now that the State has changed its guidance to allow outdoor children's playgrounds operated by government agencies to operate, and if San Francisco remains assigned to the Orange tier, the Department of Public Health will issue a directive and guidance to allow outdoor playgrounds to reopen. San Francisco anticipates this change will occur by October 14.

### **San Francisco launches school reopening online dashboard to help parents and administrators**

On September 22, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), along with the COVID Command Center and DataSF announced the creation of an online and interactive dashboard tool to help track the reopening of schools in San Francisco. The school [re-opening dashboard](#), which will be updated daily at 9 a.m., will provide parents, administrators and the public with real-time information on which schools have applied for reopening, where they are in the process, and if they have been approved for reopening.

As state and local COVID-19 indicators permit, San Francisco schools may now resume in-person instruction with approved safety plans in place. The SFDPH approach to the reopening process for San Francisco TK-12 schools (transitional kindergarten through 12th grade) prioritizes the reopening of younger grades for in-person learning this fall. Elementary schools are reopening first, followed by middle schools, and then high schools. TK-12 schools will reopen their elementary school grades first, followed by their middle school and high school grades. San Francisco Unified School District



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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schools are not anticipated to begin in-person instruction this fall and are providing distance learning. More than 100 private, parochial or charters schools have requested applications for in-person learning this fall. To date, 68 schools have submitted applications and 28 schools have been approved for re-opening. The applications are being reviewed on a rolling basis.

School reopening guidelines and safety procedures for in-person instruction can be found at the [school reopening page](#).

### **Department of Public Health's Black/African American Health Initiative film to be featured at film festival**

The San Francisco Department of Public Health's film [\*Working to eliminate health disparities within the black African American Community in San Francisco\*](#) has been accepted and confirmed for screening during the American Public Health Association (APHA) Film Festival at the APHA's 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting and Expo (Oct. 24 - 28). According to the information currently available, all films will be available on-demand. Because the film sessions are not live, there is no specific date/time for each film.

Since 2014, the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) has led the Black/African American Health Initiative (BAAHI) to address pervasive health disparities. To obtain a copy of the 2018 Report on the Health of Black/African Americans in San Francisco or to get additional information about BAAHI and its activities, please email: [BAAHI@sfdph.org](mailto:BAAHI@sfdph.org).

### **DPH in the News**

Hoodline, Oct 2 2020, SF starts transitioning homeless out of SIP hotel rooms, leaving their futures uncertain

<https://hoodline.com/2020/10/sf-starts-transitioning-homeless-out-of-sip-hotel-rooms-leaving-their-futures-uncertain>

KPIX CBS Bay Area, Oct 2 2020, San Francisco Health Director: Trump's disregard of science has caught up to him

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/10/02/san-francisco-health-director-dr-grant-colfax-trump-disregard-science-covid19/>

Mission Local, Oct 2 2020, Black employees condemn S.F. Department of Human Resources for silencing discrimination complaints

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/10/black-employees-condemn-s-f-department-of-human-resources-for-silencing-discrimination-complaints/>

NBC News, Oct 2 2020, California enacts measures to reduce COVID rates in Latino, Black, Pacific Islander communities



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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City and County of San Francisco  
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Mayor

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/california-enacts-measures-reduce-covid-rates-latino-black-pacific-islander-n1241802>

SF Chronicle, Oct 2 2020, Bay Area residents react to Trump's coronavirus test results: 'We are in crazy times'

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Bay-Area-residents-react-to-Trump-s-coronavirus-15616568.php>

SFist, Oct 2, 2020, SF Public Health Director to Trump: your flagrant disregard for science has caught up with you

<https://sfist.com/2020/10/02/sf-health-director-to-trump-your-flagrant-disregard-for-science-has-caught-up-with-you/>

Healthline, Oct 1 2020, San Francisco has the lowest COVID death rate: what other cities can learn

<https://www.healthline.com/health-news/san-francisco-has-the-lowest-covid-19-death-rate-what-other-cities-can-learn>

Mission Local, Oct 1 2020, Kids can get COVID test at neighborhood sites, Department of Public Health announces

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/10/kids-can-get-tested-at-neighborhoods-covid-testing-sites-department-of-health-announces/>

SF Chronicle, Oct 1 2020, Bay Area leaders wrestle with state's new health equity measures

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Bay-Area-health-leaders-wrestle-with-state-s-15614244.php>

Eater SF, Sep 30 2020, SF's indoor dining rules: televisions forbidden, employee 'de-escalation' training mandatory

<https://sf.eater.com/2020/9/30/21495562/san-francisco-indoor-dining-rules-television>

SF Chronicle, Sep 30 2020, Indoor dining brings hope to San Francisco restaurants for the first time in months

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Indoor-dining-brings-hope-to-San-Francisco-15610532.php#photo-20041803>

SF Chronicle, Sep 30 2020, Places of worship reopen, but few flock to the pews

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Places-of-worship-reopen-but-few-flock-to-the-15610398.php>

Deadline, Sep 29 2020, Mission Local, Sep 29 2020, With citywide COVID-19 cases low, San Francisco restaurants and churches move indoors

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/with-citywide-covid-19-cases-low-san-francisco-restaurants->





## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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City and County of San Francisco  
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### [churches-begin-to-move-indoors/](#)

NBC Bay Area, Sep 29 2020, Movie theaters reopening soon in San Francisco, but there's a catch  
<https://deadline.com/2020/09/san-francisco-movie-theaters-reopening-concessions-ban-coronavirus-covid-19-1234588395/#comments>

San Francisco announces indoor dining, other activities can resume Wednesday  
<https://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/san-francisco/san-francisco-announced-indoor-dining-other-activities-can-resume-wednesday/2372149/>

Mission Local, Sep 28 2020, Essential immigrant workers march and rally for more resources to battle COVID-19  
<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/essential-immigrant-workers-march-and-rally-for-more-resources-to-battle-covid-19/>

SF Gate, Sep 27 2020, Last-minute scramble to update San Francisco's indoor dining rules  
<https://www.sfgate.com/food/article/San-Francisco-indoor-outdoor-dining-guidelines-15599549.php>

SF Chronicle, Sep 26 2020, S.F. goes begging to fund crucial COVID-19 program that pays essential workers for quarantine  
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/heatherknight/article/S-F-goes-begging-to-fund-crucial-COVID-19-15598906.php>

Eater SF, Sep 25 2020, SF officials reverse position on capacity limits for indoor dining  
<https://sf.eater.com/2020/9/25/21456307/restaurant-reopening-san-francisco-capacity-workers-indoor-dining>

SF Chronicle, Sep 25 2020, Two big reasons S.F. has the lowest COVID death rate among major U.S. cities  
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Two-big-reasons-S-F-has-the-lowest-death-rate-15597761.php>

SF Examiner, Sep 25 2020, SoMa supportive housing project on former federal property breaks ground  
<https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/soma-supportive-housing-project-on-former-federal-property-breaks-ground/>

SF Gate, Sep 25 2020, Supportive housing breaks ground  
<https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/Supportive-Housing-Breaks-Ground-15596414.php>

GlobeNewswire, Sep 24 2020, Standardized data collection and training to help reduce health disparities for LGBTQ patients





## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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<https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/09/24/2098870/0/en/Standardized-data-collection-and-training-to-help-reduce-health-disparities-for-LGBTQ-patients.html>

Mission Local, Sep 24 2020, UCSF Grand Rounds: Mayor Breed says the city hasn't done enough for its Latinx residents, applause for the city's low death rate and a reminder that much work remains

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/ucsf-grand-rounds-mayor-breed-says-the-city-hasnt-done-enough-for-its-latinx-residents-applause-for-the-citys-low-death-rate-and-a-reminder-that-much-work-remains/>

SF Examiner, Sep 24 2020, Abundant Birth Project gives expecting mothers one less thing to worry about

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/abundant-birth-project-gives-expecting-mothers-one-less-thing-to-worry-about/>

Mission Local, Sep 23 2020, Experts baffled by San Francisco's dearth of data and COVID testing in Latinx community

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/experts-baffled-by-san-franciscos-dearth-of-data-and-covid-testing-in-latinx-community/>

KTVU, Sep 22 2020, San Francisco launches new tool to track school reopenings

<https://www.ktvu.com/news/san-francisco-launches-new-tool-to-track-school-reopening>

SF Chronicle, Sep 22 2020, New tracker lets you see which S.F. schools are ready to reopen for in-person learning

SF Gate, Sep 22 2020, Why SF has the lowest COVID-19 death rate of any other major city

<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/San-Francisco-city-U-S-lowest-death-rate-country-15578435.php>

SF News, Sep 22 2020, SF Archdiocese leads thousands in protest against worship restrictions

<https://www.thsfnews.com/sf-archdiocese-leads-thousands-in-protest-against-worship-restrictions/67498>

Good Morning America, Sep 20 2020, Abundant Birth Project TV coverage

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1162410714159236>

SF Chronicle, Sep 20 2020, First cases of flu hit Bay Area, marking start of a dangerous season ahead

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/First-cases-of-flu-hit-Bay-Area-marking-start-of-15579227.php>



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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LA Times, Sep 18 2020, San Francisco, on cusp of advancing in tiered reopening, will let restaurants serve indoors soon

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-09-18/san-francisco-will-let-restaurants-reopen-indoors-soon>

Mission Local, Sep 18 2020, Mantra 'follow the data and science' to crush COVID-19 falls short for Latinx and southeast San Francisco

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/mantra-follow-the-data-and-science-to-crush-covid-19-falls-short-for-latinx-and-southeast-san-francisco/>

Mission Local, Sep 18 2020, Supervisor Ronen will call for hearings on how DPH has allocated COVID-19 resources

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/supervisor-ronen-will-call-for-hearings-on-how-dph-has-allocated-covid-19-resources/>

SF Business Times, Sep 18 2020, Indoor dining in San Francisco moves forward on new timeline

<https://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/news/2020/09/18/mayor-breed-announces-timeline-for-reopening-indoo.html>

KPIX, Sep 17 2020, Health inspectors evaluate San Francisco schools in advance of reopening

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/09/17/health-inspectors-evaluate-san-francisco-schools-reopening/>

SF Chronicle, Sep 17 2020, SF private schools inch closer to reopening, but public schools may not return until January

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/SF-private-schools-inch-closer-to-reopening-but-15576381.php>

The Hill, Sep 16 2020, Pregnant Black, Pacific Islander women in San Francisco to receive \$1,000 monthly supplement

<https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/516657-pregnant-black-pacific-islander-women-in-san-francisco-to>

KALW Radio, Sep 16 2020, San Francisco schools open 'hubs' to support students' access to learning

<https://www.kalw.org/post/san-francisco-schools-open-hubs-support-students-access-learning#stream/0>

KPIX, Sep 16 2020, Some Bay Area movie theaters reopening at 25 percent capacity

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/09/16/some-bay-area-movie-theaters-reopening-at-25-percent-capacity/>



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

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City and County of San Francisco  
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Mayor

The Progressive, Sep 16 2020, Western wildfires could worsen inequality  
<https://progressive.org/op-eds/western-wildfires-worsen-inequality-jones-200916/>