



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 September 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>

State Court upholds 2018's Proposition C – freeing up hundreds of millions in homelessness funding

On September 9th, the State Supreme Court upheld the 2018 voter initiative Proposition C (Prop C), freeing up hundreds of millions in funding for homeless services. The measure will raise \$250 million to \$300 million per year from a tax on gross receipts of corporations with annual revenue above \$50 million. This revenue must be allocated to fund homeless services, with at least 25 percent being directed to mental health services for homeless individuals. While the ruling can be appealed, it does allow San Francisco to start spending Prop. C revenue that it had kept in reserve during the legal challenge — \$492 million has been collected to date. The funding provides more certainty for the City's pending budget proposal, which was balanced with the assumption the City would see the revenue from the measure.

San Francisco announces plan and next phases of reopening businesses and activities

Today, there are over 10,000 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 91 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

San Francisco is currently in the “red tier” in the State’s new color-coded tiered system, which provides the City the discretion to move forward with reopening some activities. However, case rates remain high, reinforcing the need to move cautiously.

On September 10, Mayor London N. Breed, Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Health, and Assessor-Recorder Carmen Chu, co-Chair of the City’s Economic Recovery Task Force, announced San Francisco is moving forward with additional reopening on Monday, September 14. In addition to previously announced businesses and activities planned for mid-September, indoor personal services with limited capacity and indoor gyms with limited capacity will also be opening on Monday.



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San Francisco's resumed reopening started on September 1 with outdoor activities that are lower risk and moves to indoor activities that are lower risk and with limited capacity. San Francisco's reopening will continue on Monday, September 14 with additional outdoor and indoor activities, including services that are opening earlier than the City previously announced. The businesses and services that will resume indoors with limited capacity include hair salons, barber shops, massage services, nail salons, gyms and fitness centers with limited capacity. Only those services where face coverings can be worn at all times by everyone involved will reopen at this time.

As previously announced, hotels, outdoor family entertainment centers, drive-in entertainment like outdoor movies, and outdoor tour buses and boats will also reopen on the 14th under rules for outdoor gatherings. Indoor museums and galleries may submit health and safety plans the week of September 14th and will be able to open as early as September 21st following submission of their plan to the Department of Public Health. Additional services, businesses, and activities will resume over the coming weeks and months as long as San Francisco continues to make progress on limiting the spread of COVID-19.

On Monday, September 14, Community Hubs will open in San Francisco to support students with distance learning. Given San Francisco's recent success in slowing transmission, in-person learning and child and youth development activities is planned to be opened on a rolling basis. The goal is for in-classroom learning to resume on a rolling basis, starting with the youngest children, for whom distance learning has been the most challenging. The City anticipates in classroom learning with limited capacity for TK-6th grade will begin to resume September 21st for schools that have submitted a safety plan and have received approval. Other child and youth development activities are underway, including after-school programs and childcare facilities.

To support a safer reopening, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development is coordinating the distribution of free personal protective equipment for San Francisco's small businesses. Small businesses that would like to request a 30-day supply of hand sanitizer, surgical masks, and face shields should coordinate with their nearest participating community-based organization. Program details and availability can be found online [here](#).

The gradual reopening of businesses and activities will increase travel and interaction throughout the city, which means a high likelihood of increasing community spread of the virus and an increase in cases. Public health officials will continue to assess the Key Public Health Indicators, particularly new positive case counts and hospitalizations to monitor San Francisco's capacity to respond and to potentially pause or reverse any reopenings.

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. All San Franciscans must do their part to limit the spread of COVID-19, including face masking, social distancing and handwashing.



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Mayor London Breed announces another year of improvement in new HIV diagnoses and care outcomes

On September 10, Mayor London N. Breed and Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Health, announced the results of the 2019 Annual HIV Epidemiology Report by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH). The report shows another year of improvement in new HIV diagnoses and care outcomes and includes new data and analysis to further understand the disparities of some vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by higher HIV diagnosis rates and poorer health outcomes.

New HIV diagnoses in San Francisco declined to a record-low of 166 in 2019. The 19% decrease in new diagnoses since 2018 shows a positive trend towards achieving San Francisco's goal of zero new HIV infections. This represents a 65% decline since 2012, compared with nearly level values nationally. Moreover, the City made significant headway with HIV care outcomes. Ninety five percent of new diagnoses were linked to care within one month, and 78% of new diagnoses were virally suppressed within six months after diagnosis. The recent declines in new diagnoses included declines among Black/African Americans, Latinx, people who inject drugs, and people experiencing homelessness.

Despite the progress that San Francisco continues to make in reducing the number of new HIV diagnoses and improving care outcomes, disparities that were observed in previous years still exist. While the total number of new diagnoses and rates of diagnosis declined for Black/African Americans and Latinx people, the diagnosis rates for Black/African American and Latinx men and women were still higher than the rates for White and Asian and Pacific Islander men and women. Among people living with HIV, approximately 75% are virally suppressed, however viral suppression was lower for people experiencing homelessness (39%) and for people who inject drugs (66%).

The 2019 report features new data tables that display information about HIV diagnosis rates by poverty, income, and education level. The report reveals that HIV diagnosis rates were higher among persons living in census tracts that had high percentages of people below the federal poverty level, a higher percentage of people with less than a high school education, and lower median household incomes.

While the City focuses on further improving linkage and retention in care and enhanced patient outreach, health officials urge people to help make sure the City does not lose its momentum gained from the past few years by continuing to seek HIV prevention and treatment services. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has added significant new challenges in managing the HIV epidemic due to reduced HIV testing and care utilization. DPH is working on guidance about how to conduct HIV and STI testing and services most safely for patients and providers. Meanwhile, as the City gradually reopens, HIV providers and services are dedicated to ensuring their adjusted protocols and procedures are in alignment with COVID-19 safety and prevention measures.



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The new 2019 HIV annual report can be found online [here](#). The report will be presented to the San Francisco Health Commission on Tuesday, October 6 at 4:00pm.

Findings of COVID-19 testing study at transit hub support ongoing high rates of COVID-19 in Latinx community

In August, a three-week low-barrier COVID-19 testing study was launched at the 24th Street Mission BART Plaza. The study was led by [Unidos En Salud](#), a collaboration between UC San Francisco and the [Latino Task Force on COVID-19](#), was conducted in partnership with the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), BART, the office of San Francisco Supervisor Hillary Ronen, and the Chan Zuckerberg Biohub. According to data collected from the testing initiative, low-income Latinx essential workers continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Their study shows continued high demand for access to testing.

The Latinx community is disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, with over half of COVID-19 cases in San Francisco diagnosed in the Latinx community. In response to this inequity, the Department of Public Health is focusing on working with community leaders to strengthen the COVID-19 prevention and care response, including through increasing access to testing. Recently, through mobile pop up sites, testing has expanded in neighborhoods with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection including the Mission, OMI, Visitacion Valley and Bayview Hunters Point. With regard to contact tracing and case investigation, 89% of Latinx cases have been interviewed and more than 90% of contacts were interviewed since June. In addition, 46% of residents of isolation and quarantine hotels have identified as Latino.

National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept 6-12

The Department of Public Health's (DPH) Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) team is promoting equitable access to the mental health and substance use services we provide, in a campaign that begins with national Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 6-12. During Suicide Prevention Week, the campaign shared suicide prevention resources at the Carnival health fair in the Mission District, partnered with the consumer-led committee, Stigma Busters, to disseminate messaging to community partners, and illuminated San Francisco City Hall with teal and purple colors on the eve of Suicide Prevention Day.

MHSA plans to partner with the Mental Health Association SF (MHASF) to support their expansion of suicide prevention and training efforts and we will collaborate with them on



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developing best practices to help support a comprehensive and integrated approach to suicide prevention.

Additionally, MHSA is working with the COVID Command Center on the second phase of the campaign, which is focused on the unique, enduring stress of the COVID-19 pandemic and promoting access to DPH's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) programs. BHS has a culturally competent citywide network of mental health programs that serve children, adults, seniors, and individuals experiencing homelessness. They raise awareness, reduce stigma, and provide screening and early intervention, and they are vital to supporting San Franciscans through this difficult time.

New grant award for Behavioral Health System's Early Psychosis Intervention Services

San Francisco is one of five counties awarded a four-year \$2 million grant from the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to expand Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) services. The new MHSOAC grant will leverage the Department of Public Health's Behavioral Health System (BHS) Transitional Age Youth (TAY) System of Care's current investment in EPI services. The grant will also allow Felton Institute to increase access to their EPI services and ensure fidelity to the Coordinated Specialty Care model, an evidence-based and integrated EPI model.

BHS has partnered with Felton Institute over the past 10 years to support the building of a nationally recognized evidence-based EPI model that has been replicated around the state, and these EPI services are an integral part of the BHS TAY System of Care's treatment continuum for youth and young adults. Felton's current San Francisco EPI programs include the (re)MIND program, which provides evidence-based therapy, medication and employment services for people experiencing first episode psychosis; and the BEAM UP program, which provides screening and intervention for young people at clinical high risk for psychosis. This work is extremely important - caught early, it may be possible to delay or prevent the onset of chronic and disabling psychosis.

Whole Person Care lays groundwork for quick COVID-19 response

The City of San Francisco's participation in Whole Person Care (WPC) is improving care for people with complex health and social needs, particularly those who are homeless and most vulnerable to COVID, by increasing cross-sector partnership and data sharing. San Francisco's WPC data infrastructure is the product of strong partnerships across the Department of Public Health (DPH), HSA, HSH, and others. To respond to COVID-19, San Francisco developed a risk assessment tool, based on national CDC guidelines, which enables rapid identification of the highest-risk individuals in the database and locating them based on current residence. Established data sharing arrangements is essential to San Francisco's response.



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San Francisco is a member of a 25-city cohort of California cities participating in WPC, a \$3 billion Medicaid waiver pilot program integrating medical care, behavioral health, and social services. Cross-sector partnerships are a key facet of the WPC, and relationships in place before the pandemic have been further activated to protect unhoused and vulnerable residents during COVID. For example, San Francisco's WPC pilot leveraged existing partnerships with the Health and Human Services Agency (HSA), Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), and the SF Homeless Outreach Team (SF HOT) to address COVID-19 among individuals experiencing homelessness. In moving unsheltered individuals into shelter-in-place sites, San Francisco implemented a support system for individuals with behavioral health needs. At these sites, San Francisco Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provides low-threshold engagement and assessment to eliminate the barriers that have historically prevented individuals from accessing shelter and care, such as intoxication or pet ownership. Community-based organizations also provide peer support and intensive case management by phone, online, and in-person at the hotels.

Environment Health Branch relocates to achieve 'one stop permit stop'

The Environmental Health Branch officially moved out of Fox Plaza, 1390 Market Street, to the new Permit Center located at 49 S. Van Ness on August 24th. Under the coordination of Senior Inspector, Pam Jin, staff experienced minimal disruption during the move and the branch continues to serve the public and enforce the Health Orders.

When the new Permit Center becomes fully operational, it will serve as the "one stop permit shop" for San Francisco that allows customers to meet all their permitting needs in one building. The Environmental Health Branch joins other City Departments including Department of Public Works, Department of Building Inspection, San Francisco Fire Department, and Planning Department, which already reside in the building.

Staying safe during extreme heat and poor air quality

The Department Public Health's Emergency Preparedness & Response and Climate Health branches worked with the City's COVID Command Center and City Agencies to provide comprehensive plans for responses to extreme heat and poor air quality. Even during days of extreme heat and poor air quality, we must continue to protect ourselves and our community from COVID-19. The public is encouraged to stay home when possible.



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The City continues to respond extreme heat events, utilizing than plans which include public messaging via media outlets, social media and SF Alert. The City will also open Weather Relief Centers throughout the city for members of the public. The City continues to respond as needed to mitigate health impacts of wildfire smoke, due to the numerous wildfires burning around the Bay Area and Northern California.

For more extreme heat and poor air quality safety tips during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit www.sf72.org.

DPH in the News

BAR, Sep 10 2020, SF HIV cases fell by 19% in 2019

<https://www.ebar.com/news/news/296980>

Eater SF, Sep 10 2020, San Francisco officials ‘strongly discourage’ Halloween trick-or-treating, but won’t ban it

<https://sf.eater.com/2020/9/10/21430758/halloween-2020-coronavirus-pandemic-san-francisco-trick-or-treating>

KQED, Sep 10 2020, SF will allow salons, gyms, museums to reopen for indoor service

<https://www.kqed.org/coronavirusliveupdates/news/11837368/sf-will-allow-salons-gyms-museums-to-reopen-for-indoor-service>

Mission Local, Sep 10 2020, Health Officer orders closure of all indoor gyms, private and public, ‘effective immediately’

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/indoor-gym-san-francisco/>

SF Chronicle, Sep 10 2020, Bay Area elementary schools are starting to reopen. Here’s where each county stands

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/education/article/Bay-Area-elementary-schools-are-starting-to-15555446.php>

Tech Crunch, Sep 10 2020, Carbon Health to launch 100 pop-up COVID-19 testing clinics across the US

<https://techcrunch.com/2020/09/10/carbon-health-to-launch-100-pop-up-covid-19-testing-clinics->



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[across-the-u-s/](#)

USA Today, Sep 10 2020, Learning pods help kids bridge social divide

<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/2020/07/02/social-bubbles-why-they-could-help-slow-covid-19-infections/5357953002/>

Jewish News of Northern California, Sep 10 2020, San Francisco Jewish senior home resuming family visits

<https://www.jweekly.com/2020/09/09/san-francisco-jewish-senior-home-resuming-family-visits/>

Eater SF, Sep 9 2020, San Francisco shouldn't expect indoor dining until 'mid October,' maybe later

<https://sf.eater.com/2020/9/9/21428978/indoor-dining-san-francisco-santa-cruz-napa-santa-clara>

KPIX, Sep 9 2020, Reopening: County color-coded plan can mean different rules for businesses on same block

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/09/09/reopening-county-color-coded-plan-can-mean-different-rules-for-businesses-on-same-block/>

SF Chronicle, Sep 9 2020, Illness pauses UK coronavirus vaccine trial as UCSF enrolls 1,000 Bay Area volunteers

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Illness-pauses-UK-coronavirus-vaccine-trial-as-15551612.php>

Mission Local, Sep 8, San Francisco struggles to fill hub spots to help disadvantaged students

<https://missionlocal.org/2020/09/san-francisco-struggles-to-fill-hub-spots-to-help-disadvantaged-students/>

SF Chronicle, Sep 8 2020, Latinos make up 71% of coronavirus cases in largely white Marin County. Will new equity efforts help?

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Latinos-make-up-75-of-coronavirus-cases-in-15548676.php>

SF Chronicle, Sep 6 2020, Bay Area experts fear Trump prodding will yield subpar coronavirus vaccine

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Bay-Area-experts-fear-Trump-prodding-will-yield-15545314.php>



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SF Chronicle, Sep 5 2020, Tenderloin tents are now rare. Open-air drug dealing is still all too common

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/heatherknight/article/Tenderloin-tents-are-now-rare-Open-air-drug-15544410.php>

SF Gate, Sep 5 2020, Health and resource fair this weekend

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/Health-And-Resource-Fair-This-Weekend-15545002.php>

Golden Gate Xpress, Sep 5 2020, Board of Supervisors pass SRO tenant protection COVID-19 ordinance

<https://goldengatexpress.org/93954/city/board-of-supervisors-passes-sro-tenant-protection-covid-19-ordinance/>

BAR, Sep 4 2020, SF health dept. publishes new 'risk reduction' guidance for sex during COVID

https://www.ebar.com/news/latest_news/296835

KQED, Sep 4 2020, How to cope with the California heat wave

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11836824/how-to-cope-with-the-california-heat-wave>

SF Chronicle, Sep 4 2020, SFPD gyms have remained open during the pandemic. So why are private ones still closed?

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/SFPD-gyms-have-remained-open-during-the-pandemic-15542002.php>

SF Chronicle, Sep 4 2020, Exclusive: Under pressure from relatives, SF allows outdoor nursing home visits

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Under-pressure-from-relatives-San-Francisco-15544392.php>

KPIX, Sep 3 2020, San Francisco DA Boudin charges former public health official in widening corruption case

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2020/09/03/san-francisco-da-boudin-charges-former-public-health-official-in-widening-corruption-case/>



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SF Chronicle, Sep 3 2020, Three SF supervisors, environmental groups seek ouster of health official after Chronicle investigation

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Three-SF-supervisors-environmental-groups-seek-15541719.php>

SF Examiner, Sep 3 2020, Police do not belong in hospitals either

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/opinion/police-do-not-belong-in-hospitals-either/>

New Yorker, Sep 2 2020, We can solve the coronavirus-test mess now – if we want to

<https://www.newyorker.com/science/medical-dispatch/we-can-solve-the-coronavirus-test-mess-now-if-we-want-to>