

Latest COVID-19 Updates from LA County's Department of Public Health (as of 6/15/20)

CASES:

Total Cases: 73,791

Total Deaths: 2,926

Cases Today: 1,071

Hospitalized(current): 1,285

TESTING:

Testing capacity continues to increase. As of 6/13, approximately 803,220 people in Los Angeles County have been tested for COVID-19 and 8% of people testing positive.

Testing is Prioritized for:

- Symptomatic persons
- Asymptomatic persons:
 - Persons over age 65
 - Those with a chronic medical condition
 - Essential workers, which includes: Social service employees; Critical government personnel; Health care professionals; Grocery and food service workers; Utility and other public employees
- This is in addition to testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals in congregate institutional settings.
- The LA County Department of Health Services and Public Health are currently working with our primary healthcare centers and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) to make sure that an expansion of testing can happen within communities and by trusted providers. CVS Pharmacy is now providing free COVID-19 testing at some locations.

SHELTERING:

The Office of Emergency Management has designated LAHSA as the lead agency for work relating to people experiencing homelessness

Medical Sheltering: Los Angeles County has stood up temporary quarantine and isolation shelters to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These temporary shelters, using hotels and motels throughout the County, is for individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 and must isolate and need assistance from the County to do so.

Project Roomkey: Project Roomkey is a collaborative effort by the State, County, City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to secure hotel and motel rooms for vulnerable people experiencing homelessness, with a focus on seniors and individuals with existing health conditions. It provides a way for people who don't have a home to stay inside to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Currently Project Roomkey has 3,601 rooms leased and 3,767 clients have been sheltered (some are families). Additionally, individuals are beginning to exit project Roomkey into permanent housing.

In support for those experiencing homelessness on May 12th Supervisor Kuehl authored a motion directing LAHSA to create a Homeless COVID-19 Recovery Plan. LAHSA will develop this plan in collaboration with numerous County departments and the City of Los Angeles to insure that those who have been temporarily sheltered are able to move into permanent housing and not fall back into homelessness.

Updates from Supervisor Kuehl and Recent Motions:

Last week, the County announced that, following state directives, they would issue guidelines to allow the safe [re-opening of gyms, camps, museums, campgrounds, hotels, and more](#). Trying to strike the correct balance between safety precautions and the hopes of residents across LA County who are eager to engage in a little summer fun, we urge, yet again, everyone to do their part.

Please, don't ever leave the house without the most essential Summer 2020 accessory, your mask! All of these venues require appropriate face-coverings as part of the infection-control safeguards businesses must adhere to in order to remain open. The ability of LA County to continue on the road to recovery is completely contingent on the public's willingness to follow public health guidance, especially wearing a mask and keeping your distance.

Reducing Incarceration in LA County

This week, the Board passed two motions to continue decarceration of both young people and adults in county detention facilities and jails.

The first motion, authored by Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Janice Hahn, follows recommendations from the Alternatives to Incarceration workgroup regarding jails. The County has already reduced the jail population by releasing certain inmates deemed not a threat to the community among COVID-19 concerns. This motion seeks to maintain these reduced jail populations. The CEO and Auditor-Controller will provide a report back to the Board, outlining alternative placements in the County's system of care that can support rehabilitation.

The second motion, authored by Supervisor Hilda Solis, requires maintenance of the reduced numbers of youth detained in county halls and camps under sentence by the court. The motion highlights both local and statewide efforts to shift from a punitive juvenile system to a rehabilitative one that prioritizes community-based services. In addition to producing a more effective and restorative youth justice system, the strategy of keeping populations low and reallocating resources to communities will help LA County save money in the long-term.

Capping Fees for Third-Party Delivery Service Platforms

Restaurants, especially small, family-owned restaurants, are currently struggling to survive, so I am very pleased that the Board passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis to ease a price-gouging burden placed on these small businesses by third party delivery services.

Third-party delivery platforms have been charging restaurants up to 30% of the purchase price of an order and smaller, independent restaurants have been especially impacted because they lack the bargaining power to negotiate better rates. Restaurant profit margins are often so low that non-chain restaurants barely turn a profit because these fees are so high. This motion calls on CEO, County Counsel, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services to draft an ordinance by the July 7th Board meeting that would cap fees charged by third-party delivery platforms to food establishments.

The motion also suggests prohibiting platforms from reducing drivers' compensation (i.e., garnishing tips) so that companies cannot pass this expense onto already underpaid gig workers.

Response to Disparities Illuminated by COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed and exacerbated racial, ethnic, and income disparities and the deadly consequences that ensue. Throughout this health crisis, there have been disproportionate rates of COVID-19 infections and death in low-income communities of color.

In response to these health inequities, the Board passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis to pay special and closer attention to these communities especially with regard to resources and information. The motion directs the CEO to collaborate with Advancement Project California to establish a culturally competent campaign about COVID-19, including information on testing sites and health services, targeted at communities of color. CEO will also partner with community-based organizations and clinics to set up adequate testing and PPE supplies.

Preserving Data on LGBTQ Foster Children

Almost 30% of foster youth identify as LGBTQ, and they report mistreatment in the foster care system at nearly twice the rate of their non-LGBTQ peers. We know this, and can do something about it, because of data collection.

Recently, the Trump Administration removed an Obama-era requirement that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services collect data on the sexual orientation of children or parents in the Child Welfare System as part of a demographic profile. The elimination of this data will negatively impact individuals in the system who identify as LGBTQ by perpetuating structural patterns of intentional discrimination and neglect, further marginalizing both foster youth themselves and caregivers who already face barriers to adoption based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The Board passed a motion I co-authored with Supervisor Hilda Solis formalizing our opposition to this change.

Bridge Housing Project in Los Feliz

I am very pleased that the Board passed my motion laying the groundwork for a Family Bridge Housing development in Los Feliz.

The 2019 Homeless Count found that more than 8,790 members of families with underaged children were experiencing homelessness. Many families shuffle from one motel room to the next or live in vehicles, which doesn't offer them the stability and security needed to get them back on their feet. Bridge Housing is an essential resource that, in addition to providing a safe place to call home, is less expensive than motel vouchers and other forms of temporary housing.

This motion allows us to put money from our Interim Housing Capital Funding Pool towards the construction of the Riverside Drive Family Bridge Housing project, which will help house 26 families experiencing homelessness.

2020 HOMELESS COUNT RESULTS

In the time since the voters of LA County passed Measure H in 2016, we have doubled the number of people we have placed into housing each year. We have built a smart, sustainable and increasingly effective system to help men and women who are experiencing homelessness get back into housing and to help those who may be at risk of homelessness stay in their homes.

But we continue to struggle to reduce the total homeless population. For millions of people who live here, our housing market is simply unaffordable. We need half a million affordable homes that simply don't exist, and the COVID19 pandemic now threatens to make the conditions that force low-income men, women and families into homelessness even worse. Furthermore, we need to address the effects of structural racism on homelessness. It is unconscionable that 1 in 33 Black Angelenos will experience homelessness at some point in their lives. We must do better.

The 2020 Homeless Count results should be seen by all as an urgent call to action. LA is doing its part. We need state and federal partners to do theirs.

I urge the governor and state legislators to act quickly and take urgently needed steps such as funding our Homeless COVID-19 Recovery Plan, funding affordable housing, and reforming state laws that hinder rent stabilization efforts. At the state and local level, we all need to be doing more to streamline the building process and ease zoning restrictions to produce more affordable housing.

Not so long ago in our history, the federal government embraced that responsibility to ensure that every American had a decent home. There's no reason, in the wealthiest country in the history of the planet, that we can't do it again. Come November, we need to elect an administration that is prepared to truly serve all the people of this nation.

[View the 2020 Homeless Count results here.](#)