

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION
June 11, 2020**

APPROVED

COMMISSIONERS

Patrick T. Dowling, M.D., M.P.H., Chairperson *
 Kelly Colopy, M.P.P., **Vice-Chair ***
 Alina Dorian, Ph.D. *
 Jean G. Champommier, Ph.D.*
 Crystal D. Crawford, J.D.*

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES

Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director of Public Health **
 Dr. Muntu Davis, Health Officer **

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION ADVISORS

Megan McClaire, Chief of Staff *
 Dawna Treece, PH Commission Liaison*
***Present **Excused ***Absent**

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
<u>I. Call to Order</u>	<i>The meeting was called to order at 10:36 a.m. by Chair Dowling at the Central Public Health Center.</i>	<i>Information only.</i>
<u>II. Announcements and Introductions</u>	The Commissioners, DPH staff, and guests introduced themselves. March meeting minutes	<i>Information only.</i> <i>Deferred until next meeting.</i>

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<p><u>III. Public Health Report</u></p>	<p>Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director and Ms. Megan McClaire, Acting Chief Deputy Director, provided the Commission with the Public Health (PH) report and update since the last meeting on March 12, 2020.</p> <p>Public Health Updates</p> <p>Numerous businesses are reopening in Los Angeles County, and many people are returning to their employment with some type of modification. DPH has over half of its workforce assigned and dedicated to COVID-19 response-related activities. COVID-19 cases continue to increase across the county as more people return to work and are potentially exposed to others who may be able to transmit the infection. Although it is expected for cases to increase, the hope is to slow the pace.</p> <p>Slightly under 8% of people test positive for COVID-19. The percentage is low compared to the numbers reported at the beginning of the pandemic. The lower numbers are a result of an increased rate in testing. Los Angeles County (LAC) is averaging over 15,000 tests a day.</p> <p>The hospitalization rate has dropped from an average of 2000 per day to 1450 per day. Data is not only capturing people who are in the hospitals for COVID-19 care, but there are people who go in for non-emergency procedures, who are tested upon entry, and if positive, will cause the numbers to increase. DPH continues to monitor the numbers carefully. The hospitalization rate is holding steady for now.</p> <p>The death rate has gone down, but there are still too many people dying. The death rate has also decreased at skilled nursing facilities where new protocols are in placed to address many critical issues and significantly reduce death. Everyone is required to use appropriate face coverings at all times. Also, DPH facilitated testing at all 315 skilled nursing facilities that are under its purview. Up to this point, 266 out of 315 facilities have completed the COVID-19 testing. The other facilities are expected to complete COVID-19 testing in the coming week.</p>	
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All Facilities and Areas of Concern

The State issued a letter to all skilled nursing facilities to instruct routine baseline testing of all employees. In an outbreak situation, it also requires skilled nursing facilities to residents. In Los Angeles County, the Health Officer's order requires a 10% sampling every week of residents, even if there are no cases. The death toll is very high in terms of proportions of deaths at the skilled nursing facilities. Overall, 48% of fatalities cumulatively happened at skilled nursing facilities. By State law and regulation, there are no family visitations at the facilities yet, except for end-of-life care and pediatric care. There are pros and cons to this guidance because it slows the spread of COVID-19 in skilled nursing facilities. DPH is working with the State on lifting the restrictions because many facility residents are non-communicative and cannot use Skype/Facetime. Their families are desperate to connect with their loved ones.

Other areas of concern involve workplaces and congregate living situations. Most outbreaks are in skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, shelters, youth group homes, and worksites. An outbreak occurs when there is an increase in cases at a site over 14 days. Facilities are legally obligated to report outbreaks to DPH.

Over 100,000 worksites have reopened over the past few weeks. The County Health Officer's orders and reopening protocols are directives that have a force of law behind them. DPH inspected over 2,000 restaurants last week alone and continues to check restaurants, beauty shops, barbershops, and some retail stores regularly. Unfortunately, DPH cannot provide customized assistance to every single facility, so we depend on managers and employers doing the right thing.

State and Local Messaging

Risk Communication is imperative, and having the right message is crucial. Many businesses and employers are aware they reopen, but many may not be aware of the legal conditions to do so. It can be confusing because the State may give out a set of recommendations, and many businesses/employers think it is optional to follow. The messaging is getting misunderstood.

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DPH relies heavily on different sectors to get the message out to the community and businesses. DPH conducts weekly telebriefings for elected officials and other industries, who are the eyes and ears of the community. The telebriefings reach 2,000 to 3,000 participants a week, and there is an average of 300 to 400 participants per call. For specific topics, there is 700 to 800 people participate in a call. These telebriefings will continue because they help to inform the public of reopening protocols as well as other messages.

New Order and Recovery

LAC is at the end of stage 2 and is now transitioning to stage 3. Concerning the State directives, a new Health Officer Order will go into effect tomorrow, June 12th.

LAC met a set of State criteria that would allow them to be considered a variance county. For variance counties, the State issues guidance for reopening various sectors, and as the local jurisdiction, the County Health Officer can issue detailed protocols and timing for when and how those sectors can reopen.

Twelve sectors can reopen on June 12th, which include day camps, music, film, and T.V. production, campgrounds, R.V. Parks, and outdoor recreation, fitness centers, professional sports without spectators, museums, galleries, zoos, aquariums and leisure travel accommodations.

Sectors that will not open in LAC are bars and wineries, card rooms, and family amusement centers, which include movie theaters. These sectors are eligible to be opened under the State guidelines, but the LAC Health Officer did not grant the reopening because these industries carry more risk. DPH used the Boston Consulting Group to compile a risk assessment to give risk scores for all sectors that were closed and are shown to have the highest risk settings than the other industries that are reopening.

Sectors will reopen with protocols that layout infection control and distancing measures. DPH is concerned about worker protections, so

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DPH will continue to send inspectors out as much as possible to places that pose a significant concern.

Many of the industries allowed to reopen have strong unions or players associations. Consensus documents have drawn very stringent protocols for safety by these organizations. Some of these sectors include music, film, T.V. industry, and major league sporting teams. All of them have extensive documentation on their reopening and have worked with their players' associations and unions to ensure there will be a lot of protections in place.

DPH will continue to monitor the data over the next few weeks. There is roughly a 3-week delay in the current numbers because of the 14-day incubation period. The earliest people will start developing any signs of an illness can be 14 days out and further out when they decide to seek care. So, three weeks from now, we will see the full effect of the reopening.

Many businesses and employers are making required modifications, but there is still a lot of risk out there. DPH strongly discourages sectors from reopening on June 12th if they do not have the proper protocols in place. Restaurants that have not opened in-person dining and retail establishments have delayed reopening to put protections in place.

Visit DPH's website for the latest and most up-to-date information on the County Health Officer Order, the Roadmap to Recovery, and COVID-19 recovery Dashboard.

COVID-19 and Equity

There are enormous disproportionalities in the impact of COVID19 among people of color. In the case of race and ethnicity data, whites have the lowest rate of death. The county has 750 excess deaths, out of 2200, which is a third of deaths that did not need to happen if people of color had access to the same level of care and experience as the white population.

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The gap is more extensive, with people living in communities with high rates of poverty. These numbers are a reflection of who is working, who are the essential workers, and what kind of protection was available to them. In some cases, there was little to no protection, which left them unprotected and exposed. These workers then go home often to crowded households with a fair number of vulnerable people and possibly transmitting the infection. Many of these workers are not unionized.

DPH is working hard to play a more influential role to help protect these workers by using protocols to get better protection and have more enforcement of the protocols at worksites.

DPH has also posted a plan that addresses both long-term and short-term injustices that exist in the inequities surrounding testing, access to services and support, and communications. DPH will partner with community-based organizations to align resources. Dr. Ghaly and her team at DHS have worked hard to set up more testing opportunities in communities with fewer resources and no access to testing. Positivity rates are higher in communities of color. There is still a lot of work to do to link services and support and to be able to isolate and quarantine. Testing, coupled with access to proper care, is something DPH is working to do.

Dr. Davis and Dr. King are assessing the personal protective equipment (PPE) issue for the smaller providers in communities that have fewer resources and are working more closely with federally qualified health centers to try to embed testing in these sites.

Also, the City of Vernon has its health department and just recently acquired a part-time physician. The city is petitioning the State to have its own Health Officer because of the stringent recommendation and oversight of LAC, which required to test everyone at the Farmer John plant. Farmer John has reported about 180 cases out of 1700 workers.

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<p><u>IV. New Business</u></p>	<p>No new business</p>	
<p><u>V. Unfinished Business</u></p>	<p>Motion: Public Health Commission 2019 Annual Report</p>	<p><i>All in favor to approve Motion</i></p> <p><i>Roll call:</i></p> <p><i>Comm. Champommier SD1 – approved</i></p> <p><i>Comm. Crawford SD2 – approved</i></p> <p><i>Comm. Dowling SD3 – approved</i></p> <p><i>Comm. Colopy SD4 – approved</i></p> <p><i>Comm. Dorian SD5 - approved</i></p>
<p><u>VI. Public Comment</u></p>	<p>No public comment</p>	
<p><u>VII. Adjournment</u></p>	<p>MOTION: ADJOURN THE MEETING</p> <p><i>The PHC meeting adjourned at approximately 11:48 a.m.</i></p>	<p><i>Commission Dowling called a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Vice-Chair Colopy and seconded by Commissioner Dorian. All in favor.</i></p>