

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION**

July 8, 2021

**COMMISSIONERS**

Kelly Colopy, M.P.P., **Chairperson** \*\*  
Alina Dorian, Ph.D., **Vice-Chair** \*  
Crystal D. Crawford, J.D.\*  
Diego Rodrigues, LMFT, MA \*  
Patrick T. Dowling, M.D., M.P.H.\*

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES**

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

**PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION ADVISORS**

Christina Vane-Perez, Chief of Staff \*  
Dawna Treece, PH Commission Liaison\*  
**\*Present \*\*Excused \*\*\*Absent**

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION/FINDINGS</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATION/ACTION/FOLLOW-UP</b>
<b><u>I. Call to Order</u></b>	<i>The meeting was called to order remotely at 10:33 a.m. by Vice-Chair Dorian</i>	<i>Information only.</i>
<b><u>II. Announcements and Introductions</u></b>	The Commissioners and DPH staff introduced themselves.  June meeting minutes	<i>Information only.</i>  <i>Minutes moved to next month</i>
<b><u>III. Public Health Report</u></b>	Dr. Muntu Davis, County Health Officer  As of Wednesday, LAC had a total of over 24,000 deaths with total number of cases in LA County at 1,245,588. There are 243 people currently hospitalized with COVID-19, and 16% of the people who are hospitalized are in the ICU.  To date, over 7 million people have been tested and had test results reported in LA County, and the cumulative positivity rate is 17%. There has been a slight increase in cases beginning in early June and a small increase in hospitalizations.	

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Hospitalization rates decreased between 10% and 30% among Latinx, White, and Asian residents, but over the same period, they increased by 10% among Black residents from 8.4 to 9.3 hospitalization per 100,000 people. The administration of COVID vaccines are proving to be helpful as identified in studies. Nonetheless, these disproportionately increasing areas of cases and hospitalizations among Black residents are cause for alarm and require strategic actions to prevent increased transmission and illness.

The cases in skilled nursing facilities have drastically decreased. Since the staff and residents began receiving vaccinations, the numbers have remained low. For the week ending June 20<sup>th</sup>, nearly 30,000 COVID tests were completed among skilled nursing facilities staff and residents and only 7 people tested positive for COVID-19 (1 new case was among residents, and 6 were among staff). The majority of these were among unvaccinated people.

The Delta variant remains a threat for everyone who is unvaccinated. LAC has recently seen increases in cases and hospitalization and daily test positivity. The best way to protect those not able to get vaccinated that includes 1.3 million children under 12 years old, is to surround them with vaccinated people.

LAC will continue to seek to better understand the factors that may be contributing to the increased community transmission. The Delta variant is estimated to comprise more than 26% of U.S. cases. The concern about this variant is that it appears to be more highly transmissible than even the UK or the Alpha variant, which was more transmissible than and more contagious than other variants.

4 million residents in LAC are not vaccinated yet. Data affirms that fully vaccinated people are well protected from severe infections with the Delta variant; people only with one vaccine of the two-vaccine dose are not as well protected and there is an increasing evidence that a very small number of fully vaccinated individuals can become infected and may able to infect others. Therefore, LAC has made a strong recommendation if you are in a public space, even if you are

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vaccinated, to continue to wear a face covering if you don't know the vaccination status of those around you. The COVID-19 vaccines remain the most important tool we must keep our transmission down and the incubation of variants low. Each case of COVID-19 could be a potential mutation of the virus to something that may be more serious and more infectious or cause a more deadly disease.

As of June 27, we have administered more than 10.5 million doses of vaccine in the county, including more than 5.9 million first doses and more than 4.6 million second doses. This means nearly 5.7 million LAC residents have received one dose and nearly 5 million are fully vaccinated.

Although overall vaccination numbers are low, there are continued increases in vaccination in younger age groups. As of June 27th, 37 percent of our 12-15-year-olds have received at least one vaccine, as have more than half of our 16-17-year-olds. There are much smaller increases among our 18-29-year-olds, whose proportion of vaccinated people increased from 51 to 56 percent over the month between May 27 and June 27, and among our 30-49-year-olds, who saw an increase from 61 to 65 percent.

The gap is closing among adults 65 years and older reflecting in part, the longer period of time they have had to get vaccinated; the proportion of Black seniors with 1 dose of vaccine has increased to 66%, with 67% of American Indian/Alaska Native seniors and more than 70% of Latinx, White, and Asian seniors now have one dose of the vaccine.

When looking at positive tests in the group of more than 4.5 million LAC residents who achieved full vaccination status from the time we began vaccinating in December through June 29, LAC identified 2,190 people who tested positive for a COVID-19 infection contracted more than 2 weeks after they were fully vaccinated. That means about 0.05% of all vaccinated people tested positive for COVID, which is a very small number. 192 people, 0.004% of those fully vaccinated, were hospitalized for COVID infections contracted while fully vaccinated. And 20 people died of their infections -- that's 0.0004%.

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These numbers are very similar to the numbers we saw when we last looked at post-vaccination infections last month, with tiny increases in both case rates (from .04% to .05% for cases) and hospitalization rates (from .003% to .004%). We'll be watching these closely in the weeks and months to come, but there's ample evidence that the vaccines remain extraordinarily powerful at preventing people from becoming infected and more powerful than that at preventing people from becoming seriously ill and fortunately, they provide a lot of protection against dying from COVID-19.

Last week, we recommended that L.A. County residents wear face coverings while indoors, regardless of vaccination status, in those settings where vaccination status cannot be verified. The reason for this is that we are seeing increased circulation of the more infectious Delta variant that we are still learning about. The illness it causes in unvaccinated people may be more severe than the illness caused by other variants. And while vaccines protect fully vaccinated people from serious illness and death caused by the Delta variant, it does seem that this variant spreads very easily and causes mild illness in a very small number of vaccinated people. It's still unclear whether the very small number of people vaccinated with the vaccines available in the U.S. can transmit Delta-variant infection.

At the beginning of the pandemic, little was known about this virus and had very few tools to combat it. Although there are three vaccines that we know are extraordinarily effective at preventing serious illness and death against the various strains of COVID and variants of concern, there is still much we don't know about this Delta variant, including whether fully vaccinated people are capable of passing along the variant if they become infected. LAC's recommendation to wear masks indoors will help press pause on viral transmission while we learn more. We have enough risk and enough unvaccinated people for Delta to pose a threat to our recovery and masking up now could help prevent a resurgence in transmission.

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	<p>Comm. Dorian: There has been a lot of push back about masks. How can we create strong campaigns about masking when many misconceived thoughts were circulating as of June 15<sup>th</sup> when the state opened, so the masks were discarded. Also, how can we begin to think about risk communication going out to the general public on how they think about vaccination. Feedback from community organizations have been that they don't need it at this point.</p> <p>Public Health has consistently put out messages on vaccinations and have followed CDC guidance on the travel recommendations and the state's guidance on masking. The masks have been seen as the pandemic; so, when people were able to take off the mask, they seem to feel as if the pandemic is over. But there are variants like the Delta Plus that is still being studied and trying hard to reduce the chance of those who are unvaccinated to be impacted. LAC will continue to use social media, weekly telebriefings, and press releases to keep the public informed.</p> <p>Comm. Crawford: Strategies around communication and messaging can include pushing masking to hand washing or using similar public health framing when talking about seatbelts. The messaging can help open the mindset of the public.</p> <p>For additional information, please visit Public Health website <a href="http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/">http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/</a></p>	
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<p><b><u>IV.</u>    <u>Presentation:</u></b></p>	<p><b>PRESENTATION OVERVIEW</b></p> <p>No guest speaker</p>	
<p><b><u>V.</u>    <u>New Business</u></b></p>		
<p><b><u>VI.</u>    <u>Unfinished Business</u></b></p>	<p>Discussion on Return to In-person Meetings: Last month the Commissioners agreed to return to in-person meetings in September but were informed that Governor Newsom’s Executive Order was ending September 30, 2021. The Commissioners agreed to tentatively return in-person and schedule the next in-person meeting for October pending any changes or updates to Governor Newsom’s Order.</p>	<p><i>SD1 – Yea</i></p> <p><i>SD2 – Yea</i></p> <p><i>SD3 – Yea</i></p> <p><i>SD5 - Yea</i></p>
<p><b><u>VII.</u>    <u>Public Comment</u></b></p>		

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<p><b><u>VIII.</u>    <u>Adjournment</u></b></p>	<p><b><i>MOTION: ADJOURN THE MEETING</i></b></p> <p><i>The PHC meeting adjourned at approximately 11:49 a.m.</i></p>	<p><i>Commission Dorian called a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and was seconded by Commissioner Rodrigues. All in favor.</i></p>
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