

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION
September 9, 2021**

COMMISSIONERS

Kelly Colopy, M.P.P., **Chairperson** *
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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**

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION/ FOLLOW-UP
<u>I.</u> <u>Call to Order</u>	<i>The meeting was called to order remotely at 10:33 a.m. by Chair Colopy</i>	<i>Information only.</i>
<u>II.</u> <u>Announcements and Introductions</u>	The Commissioners and DPH staff introduced themselves. June and July minutes	<i>Information only.</i> <i>Minutes approved</i>
<u>III.</u> <u>Public Health Report</u>	Dr. Ferrer, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Public Health has had the honor of working with many great team members who have been with us for some time. Many of them have delayed their retirement to help when the pandemic started but will now retire. We wish a heartfelt congratulations to Jeffrey Gunzenhauser, Silvia Prieto, Frank Alvarez, and Victor Cortez. We wish them a prosperous and peaceful retirement. Megan McClaire, Chief Deputy, is leading the effort to recruit new talent to our team. There has been a consistent decline in new cases over the last three weeks; possibly a 25% decline from the high point in cases since August 8 th . Although the test positivity rate	Christina to send job announcement of open positions.

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has stayed below 3% for a while, case rates are still high, and LAC is in a difficult tier in terms of having widespread transmission across the county.

Testing has increased significantly in the county. LAC is averaging about 145,000 tests a day now. That is up from 45,000 earlier this summer. In part, this is driven by required routine testing at schools. 1.5 million children and over 200,000 staff are returning to school. Universities and colleges are all back in session, as well as businesses. Many people that were teleworking are heading back to the office too. The routine testing uncovers people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. They are immediately isolated, and their close contacts are quarantined.

Case numbers may not drop because of the increase in daily testing, but this will help identify positive cases early, which will help mitigate community transmission. LAC is averaging approximately 30 deaths a day. These deaths could have been preventable because those that passed away were unvaccinated.

Public Health has recommended and issued a report back to the Board with a set of recommendations for vaccination mandates at higher risk venues. These are places where either people are indoors and unmasked or there are high numbers of people in crowded situations, or they are people indoors engaging in a lot of physical exertion or in activities such as singing, which can magnify the chances for transmission. Women's and men's basketball will start up next month. Football and soccer arenas are welcoming back fans. Many entertainment options are now available. Clubs, event venues, and concert halls are back in full operation. The Board will decide on how the county might proceed in the weeks to come regarding the higher risk venues.

There was a lot of travel over the Labor Day weekend and travel is expected to increase as we head further into the fall. As November approaches, colder weather will drive people back inside and more gatherings will be done along with more traveling. So, there will be increased risk ahead.

In our population 12 years and older, 75% have received one dose across the county; 66% are fully vaccinated. Among 12-17 years of age, 63% have had one dose and 53% are fully vaccinated.

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There are lower rates of vaccination among younger people and for the Black and Latinx residents. Black residents have the least amount of vaccine coverage. They are at 51% with at least one dose, followed by Latinx at 60%, White residents at 69%, American Indian/Alaskan Natives 71% and Asians at 80%. 98% of the specimens that we sequenced were Delta. This is a highly contagious variant that is circulating.

Although we have more post-vaccination infection, the vaccines are doing what is needed to be done, which is protecting people against serious illness, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Of the 5.3 million residents who are fully vaccinated, 38,000 people have tested positive for COVID as of the end of August. This is an increase of 15% from the prior week. But it is important to note that less than 1% of everyone who's been vaccinated are becoming infected with COVID. Vaccination is truly our most powerful tool to both end the pandemic and lower the surge and the spread.

As the CDC and the FDA investigate the data to determine how to proceed with boosters, LAC in the meantime has put protections in place. LAC has a masking mandate at all large outdoor venues of more than 10,000 people even if they are outdoors, the exception being while attendees are actively eating and drinking.

The vaccination mandates include Healthcare workers, home health workers, EMTs, and paramedics. They are required by both State and local health office order to be fully vaccinated by the end of the month. School employees need to be vaccinated by the middle of October under State Health Office order. All county employees need to be fully vaccinated through an executive order of the Chair of the Board by the end of September.

There is a small group that exempt for bona fide religious preferences or medical exemptions. Those people who have an approved exemption will go into a testing protocol.

For more information and COVID-19 updates visit
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

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<p><u>IV. Presentation:</u></p> <p>Boosters and Third Dose in LAC</p>	<p>PRESENTATION OVERVIEW</p> <p>Dr. Seira Kurian:</p> <p>The FDA has expanded the current Emergency Use Authorizations (EUAs) for both Pfizer and the Moderna vaccines to include a third dose for those who are considered moderately or severely immunocompromised. This is to be administered at least four weeks after they have received their second dose of their mRNA vaccine.</p> <p>The populations that are approved to receive this third dose include transplant recipients or those who have either advanced or untreated HIV infection, people who are going through cancer treatment, and those taking immunosuppressive medication.</p> <p>The FDA and ACIP are reviewing data on booster doses for additional populations. A statement was released by the HHS on the 18th of August that said they were preparing for a rollout for all Americans to be given a dose about eight months after the second dose. This is all still subject to final recommendation that will be issued by the FDA and ACIP.</p> <p>Eligibility for the initial rollout for the first groups are those 65 years plus, healthcare workers, and people in long-term care facilities like skilled nursing facilities.</p> <p>Per the CDC, the US population that might qualify as being immunocompromised is approximately 3%. If applied to LAC, that would be around 300,000 individuals within LAC who might meet those eligibility criteria to be considered immunocompromised.</p> <p>Our teams have been working to increase our provider infrastructure virtually every week. Every month additional partners are brought in ranging from private providers in clinical settings to independent pharmacies. LAC has reached out to urgent care centers, mobile provider, home health, and testing companies that have really expanded their range and are including vaccination services as part of the work that they do.</p> <p>LAC has done a lot of active outreach to vaccine partners to ensure that they are using resources like their diagnosis registries or billing codes to identify individuals that might be eligible to receive these third doses and actively contacting them and recommending that they receive their third dose. In addition, LAC's hospital partners sent out messages</p>	
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through the LA Health Alert Network, which sends email blasts to all provider network that outlines all the ACIP recommendations and ask that providers identify their eligible patients and actively bring them in for vaccinations.

The facilities/groups that will be primary targets for the booster are the skilled nursing facilities. In terms of third dose and boosters, it is expected that the plan will be leveraging the long-term care pharmacies that have already been partnered with skilled nursing facilities in terms of supplying the vaccine to these facilities. They are already contracted with the skilled nursing facilities. For any new patients that come into these facilities, these skilled nursing facilities reach out to long term care pharmacies and get the vaccine to new admissions.

Public Health has started surveying their skilled nursing facilities weekly to understand and assess the number of individuals that are eligible and interested in receiving their third dose and to get information. This will help the strike team to provide additional assistance to prepare for possible delays or problems that might occur. So far, there were about 1609 residents that were identified as meeting criteria. They reported that about 200 of them had already received an additional dose and there about 1200 who had already been scheduled. We'll continue to monitor the status. Additionally, the surveys ask the ability to provide booster doses once any of their remaining residents become eligible. One of the first groups to be eligible for the booster is the 65 plus population.

The third dose or booster will be administered either 6-8 months after the second dose. If eight, we expect to see more of a spread in terms of when people will become eligible because they are not all necessarily going to be eligible on September 20th because most of these individual just started getting their first dose in mid-January with their second dose done in February. There is a bit more of a spread in term of eligibility if the recommendation comes back as eight months. The prediction is that our peak will average out to be around 150000 individuals becoming eligible within a particular week. Based on our survey results, Public Health will be able to meet the need, if only 20% of doses are allocated to boosters within about of week or so.

We will see a much larger group of people that will become eligible for boosters, since it is a six-month period when people become eligible after their second dose.. If boosters

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	<p>become available starting September 20th, there will be groups of people through the months of August and September that will all become eligible at the same time. But even with the increase, people who are eligible, based on the survey conducted, Public Health providers will have the capacity to meet this need within at least a couple of weeks.</p> <p>There is a lot of work and collaboration with CMA to identify and get the message out to become vaccine providers and join our vaccine network. This is also in anticipation of vaccines being approved for the younger pediatric population. Public Health is also focusing on recruiting more pediatric and family medicine providers to bring them into the network to help with both the current work and anticipated future work with pediatric population.</p> <p>The other group that may potentially become eligible will be our healthcare workers. There are some mandates now in place that are requiring our healthcare workers to be fully vaccinated. The estimate of healthcare workers is around 730,000.</p> <p>Public Health will continue to bolster our infrastructure and ensure to continue to bring more providers on the forefront with any efforts and prepare for the eventual movement of vaccine delivery back into the established medical infrastructure and to bring on additional independent pharmacies because we do know that that is another primary place that a lot of people seek their vaccine services.</p>	
<p><u>V. New Business</u></p>		
<p><u>VI. Unfinished Business</u></p>		

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<p><u>VII.</u> <u>Public Comment</u></p>		
<p><u>VIII.</u> <u>Adjournment</u></p>	<p><i>MOTION: ADJOURN THE MEETING</i></p> <p><i>The PHC meeting adjourned at approximately 11:47 a.m.</i></p>	<p><i>Commission Colopy called a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed and was seconded by Commissioner Rodrigues. All in favor.</i></p>