



City Manager's

COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

November 2020

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Friday, November 6, 2020

City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley provided this update on the City of Berkeley's COVID-19 response to the City Council. The reports, which are issued at least weekly, can be viewed at cityofberkeley.info/covid19-city-manager-updates.

Cal cancellation of football game

City of Berkeley Public Health works closely with UC Berkeley in their efforts to protect students, faculty and the greater community in this pandemic. The University has developed and implemented detailed plans and procedures to prevent and limit spread of COVID-19 in multiple areas, including sports and football. This careful plan allowed the City of Berkeley's Public Health Officer to authorize play and practices without crowds.

Whenever someone in our community tests positive, contact tracing and investigation is critical to stopping the spread. The positive case must isolate. The contacts must all quarantine. Without a vaccine or proven treatment, Isolation and Quarantine are critical to stopping an easily spreading, deadly virus. The same procedures are used throughout our City, including campus. We mirror federal and state guidelines.

Page 31 of [the State of California COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Institutions of Higher Education](#) defines close contacts and explains the length of the quarantine period. Even if someone tests negative during the quarantine period, they could still test positive on day 14. In that scientific context, this section gives some detail:

Individuals identified as close contacts (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) must follow state and local public health directives or orders for quarantine, regardless of the frequency of testing for those in the cohort or footprint. Close contacts must quarantine for 14 days after the last exposure.

The CDC provides [federal guidelines on how to define a close contact](#). One paragraph gives some detail on the definition of a close contact:

Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.



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No one is exempt from these rules. They are being applied throughout the state, including at each of the state's PAC-12 schools. The conference has [its own rules](#), which has minimum thresholds for the number of players required to suit up:

The Pac-12 has established minimum thresholds to play a football game of at least 53 scholarship players available to participate and the following minimum number of position scholarship players available to begin a game: seven (7) offensive linemen, one (1) quarterback and four (4) defensive linemen. Each institution shall provide a complete roster by position to the Conference office prior to the season.

Using those guidelines, the University made the decision to cancel the game.

Even in environments where there is close attention to public health guidelines such as this or those that are even more stringent, we see cases of COVID-19. That is the nature of such an easily spreading virus. The goal of public health is to limit spread both before and after a case is identified.

Health Order allows middle and high schools to reopen

Berkeley's Health Officer on Thursday gave middle and high schools the option to open [on November 9](#) if they create and post site-specific plans that incorporate City criteria to reduce spread of COVID-19 among students, faculty and staff.

Schools seeking to open must require practices now familiar to all: face coverings, physical distancing, eliminating gatherings, staying home when sick, and increased hygiene and cleaning.

These measures reflect the reality of an easily spreading disease with no proven treatment nor vaccine: there will be cases in schools, but smart, science-based practices can reduce spread before and after someone tests positive.

Berkeley Public Health has created services to support school openings, including:

- Expanded availability of systematic testing to teachers and staff
- Creation of a 6-part disease prevention training for schools
- Requiring Public Health staff site visits



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- Providing continued technical assistance, including Q&A sessions with school staff. (A training last week had more than 80 attendees, and another was held today, Nov. 6.)

This Health Order -- which parallels a separate health order for the rest of the county -- means that all grades will be able to resume school in Berkeley for the first time since a Bay Area-wide shut down [on March 17](#).

See [our community message](#).

COVID-19 Response Presentation on YouTube

The COVID-19 Response presentation shared at the October 27 Council meeting is now available on the City's YouTube channel.

To make the report more accessible, we've created a [four-part playlist](#), breaking the 90-minute presentation into shorter videos for each of the presentation's main themes:

- [Part 1: Berkeley Ready](#) covers how the City responds to emergencies, describing the planning and training over many years that enabled us to respond rapidly and nimbly to the pandemic.
- [Part 2: Berkeley Safer-at-Home](#) highlights the incredible work of our Emergency Operations Center, focusing on work across five themes: COVID-19 testing, work with vulnerable populations, public information, business and arts support, and cost recovery.
- [Part 3: Berkeley at Work](#) showcases how our organization as a whole has adapted to the pandemic, shining a light on the ways staff across the City took on new responsibilities, shifted services online, and adapted in resourceful and creative ways to continue providing excellent service to our community in this new reality.
- [Part 4: Berkeley Resilient](#) looks forward to how we will build back better once the pandemic is over, with a discussion of the City's Resilience Strategy.

I am deeply proud of the work all our staff have done to support and protect our community in this unprecedented time, and encourage you to [share these videos](#) with your networks.



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Bay Area Health Officers' Indicators to Contain COVID-19

Our [COVID-19 indicators weekly dashboard](#) is available [24/7](#), and it shows detailed information everyone can explore. We are also maintaining these written updates as an official record that's easy to share with the public.

Based on the data available, this is where we stand as of Friday:

Indicator 1: Cases & Hospitalizations Flat or Decreasing

Current status:

- There were 71 cases reported in the last 14 days
- Number of hospitalized patients in Alameda County has decreased slightly compared to 2 weeks ago, with 2 fewer people hospitalized for COVID-19 than two weeks ago - but has been rising this week

Goal currently not met.

Indicator 2: Sufficient Hospital Capacity to meet community needs

Success criteria: No more than 50% of patients in staffable non-surge hospital beds in Alameda County are COVID-19 positive.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 3: Sufficient Testing Capacity

Success criteria: Sufficient COVID-19 viral detection tests are being conducted each day through private and public sites. The goal for Berkeley is 245 tests per day, giving an effective lens into the workings of the virus in our community.

- Over the last two weeks, an average of 984 tests per day have been reported for Berkeley residents, no matter where they were tested -- private hospitals, labs or our City-coordinated sites.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 4: Sufficient Disease Containment (case investigation, contact tracing, and isolation/quarantine)



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Success criteria:

- 90% of all cases are reached and contacts identified - currently at 85%
- 90% of cases that we reach are isolated safely -- currently at 82%
- 90% of all contacts identified -- currently at 84%
- 90% of identified cases can safely quarantine -- currently at 80%

Disease containment is a critical tool in this phase of the pandemic and reflects significantly increased staffing for contact tracing. This allows us to see how quickly we move to isolate or quarantine people -- essential tasks in limiting the spread.

Goals currently not met

Indicator 5: Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment

Success criteria:

- At least 30-day supply of PPE for all health care providers - *Goal Met*
- No hospitals, clinic, skilled nursing facility, other long term care facility, or first responder agency is struggle with obtaining PPE to submit a request for assistance - *Goal Not Met*
- None have needed to submit a resource request for assistance in obtaining PPE to EOC in the last 14 days - *Goal Not Met*

Overall Goal not currently met.

Our ability to meet these indicators can signal progress or, if conditions worsen, could lead to tightening, as we have already seen happen in neighboring counties and across the State.

Testing & Disease Containment

Our testing sites continue to test at a high rate, creating a public health infrastructure that is critical for navigating the complexities of life in a pandemic.

Last week, **Curative** tested an average of 261 people per day, approximately 56% of whom were Berkeley residents.



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Curative continues to have good availability, and community members are encouraged to [make an appointment online](#). Certain days are appointment only, and walk-ins may not be accepted.

The state-funded **Optum** test site at the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center continues to be fully booked. Last week, Optum tested an average of 141 people per day, approximately 54 percent of whom were Berkeley residents.

The state accepted the **Disease Containment Branch's** proposal to continue using State-deployed Contact Tracers and Case Investigators -- giving the City an important resource to provide quick turnaround contact tracing and case investigation services. This is particularly important whenever COVID-19 cases and outbreaks emerge Berkeley.

All of the City's information about testing services can be found at www.cityofberkeley.info/get-tested.

Support to the Unhoused

A core part of our work has been to find shelter for those people who are unhoused who are also medically vulnerable.

The four units at our house on Fifth Street are fully occupied. In addition, 10 of the 18 trailers we established are occupied by 13 people. Both of the County-run hotels continue to be used extensively, and most are Berkeley residents -- a reflection of our outreach work. 66 of 69 rooms are currently occupied.

We continue to see active use of our expanded shower program. Willard saw a total of 358 clients, for an average of 28 people per day. Of those, 83 percent were men and 17 percent were women. West Campus served a total of 299 total clients, an average of 21 per day. Of those, 90 percent were men and 10 percent were women.



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Tuesday, November 17, 2020

City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley provided this update on the City of Berkeley's COVID-19 response to the City Council. The reports, which are issued at least weekly, can be viewed at cityofberkeley.info/covid19-city-manager-updates.

New health order restricts certain indoor activities

State officials, noting a surge in COVID-19 cases locally, moved Berkeley and the rest of Alameda County into the more restrictive tier that requires certain businesses to only operate outdoors.

The new restrictions reflect some truths about the virus that can be used by everyone: half of all COVID-19 cases are [believed to be unknowingly spread by those who feel fine](#); face coverings are powerful; and the virus more easily spreads indoors.

The state decision, which is reflected in a [new City of Berkeley Health Order effective Nov. 18](#), prohibits certain indoor activities while allowing others to operate with capacity limits and other restrictions.

- The following businesses must only operate outdoors: restaurants, wineries, museums, galleries, botanical gardens, movie theaters, family entertainment centers, exhibition spaces, gyms, fitness centers, dance studios, yoga centers, churches, swimming pools.
- State law will allow certain industries to remain open indoors, but limited to 25 percent capacity: retail stores, shopping centers, strip malls.
- Grocery stores and convenience stores can open at 50 percent capacity.
- Many businesses that operate indoors using restrictions - from nail salons to barbers - will remain open, but will need to continue to use the City's Health Order and state guidance, such as one for [personal care services](#). See what's open or closed in Berkeley.

All TK-12 schools were given the option to open in Berkeley. The state decision means that schools currently teaching students in person may continue to do so. Effective November 18, those schools that have not yet opened [will not be allowed to start doing so](#), except for state-defined "cohorts" -- small-group, in-person services in controlled, supervised, and indoor environments.



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Individuals' actions continue to be powerful tools in slowing the spread of this virus for which there is neither vaccine nor proven treatment.

Our [community message](#) provides community members with a number of tools to lower the spread.

Bay Area Health Officers caution again holiday travel and gatherings

As the holidays approach, our Health Officer along with those from around the region, have been working to develop consistent messages for travel and gatherings.

They ask everyone in the region to avoid all but essential travel as it increases the likelihood of getting or spreading COVID-19. For those who must travel, health officers recommend precautions:

- Wear a face covering at all times
- Keep at least 6 feet away from other travelers, when possible
- Open windows in cars or buses
- Wash or sanitize your hands often
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Get tested before and after your travel
- Get a flu shot before traveling

People should not travel if sick. Those with a cough, fever, sore throat, or other symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should isolate themselves at home.

Health Officers strongly recommend that anyone who travels outside the Bay Area quarantine at home for 14 days after their return.

We know gatherings are important, especially during the holidays. Health Officers are also asking everyone to keep gatherings outdoors, small, short and within a stable group -- aligning with messages the City has been promoting for several months.

See and share our [community message](#), which also includes detailed, regional recommendations for [travel](#) and [gathering](#).



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Curative Flu Clinic: a critical resource created by the City at a critical time

Should a seasonal flu make someone sick, it can also make them more susceptible to COVID-19. We're urging everyone over 6 months to get a flu vaccination.

A dual infection of the flu and COVID-19, two dangerous respiratory illnesses, may increase risk of becoming severely ill and needing hospitalization.

Many symptoms for both are the same, though people will not suffer all or each of the following: fever or chills; cough; sore throat; muscle or body ache; headache, and fatigue.

Those who get the flu this year may need to get a COVID-19 test and isolate themselves at home, away from the rest of their household while awaiting results. With no proven COVID-19 treatment nor vaccine, flu vaccination is the only way to guard against a dangerous concurrent infection.

Getting a flu shot is easy: you can get the vaccine through your health care provider or many pharmacies. You can also get vaccinated at a new City-sponsored outdoor flu shot kiosk in West Berkeley. For those without insurance, vaccines are also available by appointment at the City's Public Health Clinic while supplies last.

Anyone can get a flu vaccine at a new flu shot kiosk in West Berkeley, sponsored by Berkeley Public Health and operated by our COVID-19 testing partner Curative. This outdoor, accessible location offers vaccinations by appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays, starting November 17.

Curative flu kiosk, 1900 6th Street

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30am-6pm

Open to anyone, appointments required

Sign up at flu.curative.com

This service is available at no direct cost to community members. For those who have health insurance, Curative will bill your insurance. Community members, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay, can also get vaccinated at the City of Berkeley Public Health Clinic on University.



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Ann Chandler Public Health Center, 830 University

Mondays and Wednesdays, 9am-12pm

Flu shots for community meetings 3 years of age or older

By appointment only - call (510) 981-5350

For more locations that offer flu vaccines, visit vaccinefinder.org. Those who have health insurance are encouraged to check with their regular health care provider.

See and share our [community message](#).

Bay Area Health Officers' Indicators to Contain COVID-19

Our [COVID-19 indicators weekly dashboard](#) is available 24/7, and it shows detailed information everyone can explore. We are also maintaining these written updates as an official record that's easy to share with the public.

Based on the data available, this is where we stood at the end of last week:

Indicator 1: Cases & Hospitalizations Flat or Decreasing

Current status:

- There were 84 cases reported in the last 14 days
- Number of hospitalized patients in Alameda County has increased, with 18 more people hospitalized for COVID-19 than two weeks prior.

Goal currently not met.

Indicator 2: Sufficient Hospital Capacity to meet community needs

Success criteria: No more than 50% of patients in staffable non-surge hospital beds in Alameda County are COVID-19 positive.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 3: Sufficient Testing Capacity

Success criteria: Sufficient COVID-19 viral detection tests are being conducted each day through private and public sites. The goal for Berkeley is 245 tests per day, giving an effective lens into the workings of the virus in our community.



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- Over the last two weeks, an average of 1,157 tests per day were reported for Berkeley residents, no matter where they were tested -- private hospitals, labs or our City-coordinated sites.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 4: Sufficient Disease Containment (case investigation, contact tracing, and isolation/quarantine)

Success criteria:

- 90% of all cases are reached and contacts identified - currently at 84%
- 90% of cases that we reach are isolated safely -- currently at 80%
- 90% of all contacts identified -- currently at 84%
- 90% of identified cases can safely quarantine -- currently at 79%

Disease containment is a critical tool in this phase of the pandemic and reflects significantly increased staffing for contact tracing. This allows us to see how quickly we move to isolate or quarantine people -- essential tasks in limiting the spread.

Goals currently not met

Indicator 5: Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment

Success criteria:

- At least 30-day supply of PPE for all health care providers - *Goal Met*
- No hospitals, clinic, skilled nursing facility, other long term care facility, or first responder agency is struggle with obtaining PPE to submit a request for assistance - *Goal Not Met*
- None have needed to submit a resource request for assistance in obtaining PPE to EOC in the last 14 days - *Goal Not Met*

Overall Goal not currently met.

Our ability to meet these indicators can signal progress or, when conditions worsen, lead to tightening, as we have seen this week.



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Testing & Disease Containment

Our testing sites continue to test at a high rate, creating a public health infrastructure that is critical for navigating the complexities of life in a pandemic.

Last week, **Curative** tested an average of 261 people per day, approximately 61% of whom were Berkeley residents.

Weekly appointments at the Curative site open for [online booking](#) on Saturday or Sunday, and have been filling up quickly the last two weeks.

The state-funded **Optum** test site at the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center continues to be fully booked. Last week, Optum tested an average of 101 people per day, approximately 56% of whom were Berkeley residents.

The state accepted the **Disease Containment Branch's** proposal to continue using State-deployed Contact Tracers and Case Investigators -- giving the City an important resource to provide quick turnaround contact tracing and case investigation services. This is particularly important whenever COVID-19 cases and outbreaks emerge Berkeley.

All of the City's information about testing services can be found at www.cityofberkeley.info/get-tested.

Support to the Unhoused

A core part of our work has been to find shelter for those people who are unhoused who are also medically vulnerable. Both of the County-run hotels continue to be used extensively, and most are Berkeley residents -- a reflection of our outreach work. 68 of 69 rooms are currently occupied, with a total of 80 residents.

We continue to see active use of our expanded shower program. Willard saw a total of 158 clients, for an average of 31 people per day. Of those, 89 percent were men and 11 percent were women. West Campus served a total of 128 total clients, an average of 21 per day. Of those, 94 percent were men and 6 percent were women.



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Wednesday, November 25, 2020

Deputy City Manager Paul Buddenhagen provided this update on the City of Berkeley's COVID-19 response to the City Council. The reports, which are issued at least weekly, can be viewed at cityofberkeley.info/covid19-city-manager-updates.

Urging no or limited gatherings for Thanksgiving

In the midst of a surge in COVID-19 cases spanning the Bay Area and the nation, our most imminent threat is something that, in other years, would be familiar and comforting: gatherings with other families over Thanksgiving.

As a City, we are urging people to take action by avoiding mixing with other households and canceling any planned events. While we have been communicating for weeks about holiday gatherings, today's message also seeks to give people tools to address one of the biggest barriers to compliance: social pressure.

We want people to have what state health officials call the "COVID chat:" sticking with public health guidance in a way that maintains healthy emotional and social connections to family.

The tips and guidance in our community message also align with guidance from the state. For those who continue to gather, we also give guidance on how to do that safely.

See and share [our community message](#).

Spanish-language versions of [holiday safety guidance](#), and [gathering](#) and [travel](#) recommendations from Bay Area Health Officers are available on the City's website.

Public Health Response to COVID-19 outbreak at Golden Gate Fields

City of Berkeley Public Health continues to work closely with Golden Gate Fields on a significant outbreak where more than 200 people living or working on-site at the racetrack have tested positive for COVID-19.

1/ST Racing, which operates the track, is following all of the City's recommendations for testing, quarantine and isolation. The steps they have taken include the following:



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- Every person living or working on-site has been tested and additional testing will be done.
- All those who have tested positive are isolated, following federal, state and City guidelines. The track is assisting with off-site housing for those who have tested positive and has arranged for twice daily food delivery to ensure that those individuals do not have to leave isolation and have the essential items they require.
- Golden Gate Fields' on-site medical director, an infectious disease expert, is providing medical consultation to those who live and work at the racetrack.
- For close contacts who need to quarantine for 14 days, the track is providing daily food delivery and access to medical support as well as the means to safely quarantine, including additional bathrooms and handwashing stations.

Golden Gate Fields continues to implement health and safety measures including, strict social distancing, masking policies and regular COVID-19 testing with isolation requirements for any positive cases or identified close contacts.

The City's role has been to rapidly respond to events, give coordination and direction and facilitate the many public health measures that need implementation for an outbreak of this scale.

Berkeley Public Health has, among other things, visited the site, worked with labs to facilitate speedy return of results, provided test kits, supplied personal protective equipment, given technical guidance on how to implement isolation and quarantine, and directed the nature and scope of testing.

On each aspect of this significant response, Berkeley Public Health has put the highest priority on each of these actions. Our commitment is long-term. Should testing identify more cases, further investigation and tracing will be done by Berkeley Public Health and additional isolation and quarantine will be required.

Digital Local Shopping Guide for Berkeley Businesses, Artisans

The holidays are a critical time to support our local businesses, and our Office of Economic Development has been working with a number of local partners to create a digital shopping guide for Berkeley.



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With over 100 local businesses participating, BerkeleyHolidays.com has ideas for everyone on your list, from those with a sweet tooth to fitness fanatics.

Explore gifts across nine categories, or make a social impact while you shop by filtering the list to highlight the nearly 70 [women entrepreneurs](#) and two dozen [minority- and black-owned businesses](#).

Many businesses are offering promotions for gift guide users, including discount codes ranging from 10% to 25% off your purchase.

Please share information about BerkeleyHolidays.com on your networks. Our [community message](#) may be of help.

Bay Area Health Officers' Indicators to Contain COVID-19

Our [COVID-19 indicators weekly dashboard](#) is available 24/7, and it shows detailed information everyone can explore. We also maintain these written updates as an official record that's easy to share with the public.

Based on the data available, this is where we stand as of last Friday (11/20):

Indicator 1: Cases & Hospitalizations Flat or Decreasing

Current status:

- There were 242 cases reported in the last 14 days
- Number of hospitalized patients in Alameda County has increased compared to 2 weeks ago, with 37 more people hospitalized for COVID-19 than two weeks ago

Goal currently not met.

Indicator 2: Sufficient Hospital Capacity to meet community needs

Success criteria: No more than 50% of patients in staffable non-surge hospital beds in Alameda County are COVID-19 positive.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 3: Sufficient Testing Capacity

Success criteria: Sufficient COVID-19 viral detection tests are being conducted each day through private and public sites. The goal for Berkeley is



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245 tests per day, giving an effective lens into the workings of the virus in our community.

- Over the last two weeks, an average of 1,013 tests per day have been reported for Berkeley residents, no matter where they were tested -- private hospitals, labs or our City-coordinated sites.

Goal currently met.

Indicator 4: Sufficient Disease Containment (case investigation, contact tracing, and isolation/quarantine)

Success criteria:

- 90% of all cases are reached and contacts identified - currently at 80%
- 90% of cases that we reach are isolated safely -- currently at 73%
- 90% of all contacts identified -- currently at 85%
- 90% of identified cases can safely quarantine -- currently at 78%

Disease containment is a critical tool in this phase of the pandemic and reflects significantly increased staffing for contact tracing. This allows us to see how quickly we move to isolate or quarantine people -- essential tasks in limiting the spread.

Goals currently not met

Indicator 5: Sufficient Personal Protective Equipment

Success criteria:

- At least 30-day supply of PPE for all health care providers - *Goal Met*
- No hospitals, clinic, skilled nursing facility, other long term care facility, or first responder agency is struggling to obtain PPE - *Goal Not Met*
- None have needed to submit a resource request for assistance in obtaining PPE to EOC in the last 14 days - *Goal Not Met*

Overall Goal not currently met.

Our ability to meet these indicators can signal progress or, if conditions worsen, could lead to further restrictions.



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Testing & Disease Containment

Our testing sites continue to test at a high rate, creating a public health infrastructure that is critical for navigating the complexities of life in a pandemic.

Last week, **Curative** completed a total of 1,677 tests, for an average of 280 per day, approximately 56% of whom were Berkeley residents.

The state-funded **Optum** test site at the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center continues to be fully booked. Last week, Optum completed 568 total tests, an average of 280 per day, approximately 56% of whom were Berkeley residents.

All of the City's information about testing services can be found at cityofberkeley.info/get-tested.

Support for Unhoused People

A core part of our work has been to find shelter for those people who are unhoused who are also medically vulnerable.

The four units at our house on Fifth Street are fully occupied. In addition, 13 of the 18 trailers we established are occupied by 16 people. Both of the County-run hotels continue to be used extensively, and most are Berkeley residents -- a reflection of our outreach work. 67 of 69 rooms are currently occupied by a total of 77 people.

We continue to see active use of our expanded shower program. Last week, Willard saw an average of 30 people per day. Of those, 85 percent were men and 15 percent were women. West Campus served an average of 27 people per day. Of those, 81 percent were men and 19 percent were women.