



City Manager's

COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Friday, May 15, 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 most weekdays, can be viewed at cityofberkeley.info/covid19-city-manager-updates.

Outreach to our unhoused

Our efforts to help the unhoused have been a central part of our work, and it's been multifaceted. While creating housing solutions is the biggest part of this work, such as moving people from shelters into hotels run by Alameda County.

This often hard to see work on the ground can be quantified in numbers, but the impact is bigger. This week, our City outreach teams to the unhoused visited 8 encampments, two of which were visited twice. During these visits, staff:

- Reached 135 people
- Provided 86 masks
- Distributed 66 hand sanitizers
- Gave out 98 bags of food
- Delivered 58 hot meals
- Provided 1 tent

Among the work they do is to talk with people in encampments to determine whether there are health care needs specific to this pandemic. Identified people are referred to our partners at LifeLong Medical. That resulted in 34 people being assessed, and 5 were tested for COVID-19.

Expanded shower program

The expansion of showers at Willard Pool and West Campus Pool has been a success. Average shower program numbers from May 5 – May 13 per day are as follows:

- Willard: 55 people/day, 84% male, 16% female clients
- West Campus: 17 people/day, 94% male, 6% female clients

To supplement the current shower program, Dignity on Wheels will begin its mobile shower program this weekend, starting Sunday, May 17 at Second and Cedar streets from 3pm to 7pm. They'll go to Seabreeze on Wednesday, May 20 from 8am to 12pm.



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Increasing Contact Tracing Capacity

A critical part of our work is to increase our contact tracing capacity. As more activities are permitted, there is more movement. There will be more cases, more testing and we'll need to do more follow-up in the form of contact tracing.

Contact tracing is a long-standing practice of Berkeley Public Health's communicable disease division -- and public health work around the globe. We identify cases, test them, trace contacts and then identify who will need to be quarantined or isolated.

What's different in a pandemic is the scale. We have two nurses currently doing contact tracing and investigations for the roughly 80 communicable diseases that are reported to us. Next week, we will be training 34 staff members to participate in a UCSF-hosted Contact Tracing training to learn best practices for COVID-19 positive clients.

Staff trained for these roles will be activated on an as-needed basis to support the work of the Communicable Disease Unit and Health Officer.

New visualizations on COVID-19 dashboard

We've added two new data sets to our [COVID-19 dashboard](#). Starting today, the dashboard includes easy-to-read charts to help community members track daily progress on our goals of increased testing and reduced hospitalizations.

Both pieces of data are part of the [five indicators](#) regional Health Officers are using to assess progress on containing COVID-19. These new visualizations are one step in ongoing efforts to increase transparency in our response to this unprecedented public health emergency.