



City Manager's

# COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Wednesday, July 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](http://cityofberkeley.info/covid19-city-manager-updates).*

## Outdoor Dining Resumes

Outdoor dining in Berkeley was allowed to officially resume Wednesday morning, shortly after Alameda County was approved for a variance.

Restaurants can also provide delivery and take out of food and drinks, which can include alcohol.

The City continues to take applications for commerce on streets and sidewalks. Ten permits have been approved, and another five are in the queue. We are sending people to our [guidance for outdoor commerce and dining](#).

City staff helped with [the attestation](#), which the state required to be done on a county level.

We prepared and coordinated with Alameda County so that our [Berkeley-specific community message](#) went out at the same time as the County-wide message.

## Alameda County on State monitoring list

On Monday, [additional statewide restrictions](#) were placed on jurisdictions in counties that have been on the [state monitoring list](#) for three days. Starting today, these restrictions apply to Alameda County, which was placed on the monitoring list last weekend due to elevated disease transmission levels in recent weeks.

Since Berkeley and Alameda County already have among the most restrictive rules in the state, the new restriction affected only indoor worship services -- which are now completely prohibited.

Counties that had previously allowed personal care services, hair salons, and gyms to reopen must now close those activities if they are on the monitoring list for three consecutive days. The general framework of rules strongly tilts toward allowing activities outdoors -- where the chances of exposure and transmission are much lower.



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## Crisis communications award

The City of Berkeley has received the 2020 [Excellence in Public Information and Communications \(EPIC\) Award](#) in crisis communications response from the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO) for our work during last year's public safety power shutoffs. In May, we had been named [finalists](#).

The EPIC Award, CAPIO's highest honor, recognizes "best in the field" public sector communications that "rise above innovation and craft" to create a lasting impact. Judges lauded the broad campaign reach, high quality messaging, and data-driven communications strategy of our EOC Joint Information Center, who kept community members informed, safe, and reassured with a steady flow of action oriented messages leading up to, during, and after last October's power shutoffs.

## Resources

### CDC case study: COVID-19 spread from choir practice

A [CDC case study](#) of a COVID-19 outbreak stemming from a choir practice in Washington underscores the dangers of large group gatherings, especially those that involve activities such as singing.

One person infected with COVID-19 attended the practice, after which more than half of the 61 participants became ill, three were hospitalized, and two died. The report identifies multiple points of droplet and fomite transmission during the event, including members sitting close to one another, sharing snacks, and stacking chairs at the end of the practice. The act of singing itself likely contributed to transmission through emission of aerosols, which is affected by loudness of vocalization.

This study underscores the importance of caution as we navigate reopening and changing regulations – and the need to continue wearing face coverings, frequent handwashing, and avoiding close contact with others.