



City Manager's

COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

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.