



Agenda

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

JUNE 4, 2020
1:30 P.M.

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

<https://zoom.us/j/95521860033>

Meeting ID: 955 2186 0033

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Dial:

USA 214 765 0478

USA 888-278-0254 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 845965

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Supervisor Candace Andersen, Chair
Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, Vice Chair

Agenda Items:

Items may be taken out of order based on the business of the day and preference of the Committee

1. Introductions
2. Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to two minutes).
3. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the May 28, 2020 meeting.
4. DISCUSS the provisions of the new Health Order reducing Shelter in Place restrictions that is expected to be issued on Tuesday, June 2, and effective on Wednesday, June 3.
5. The next meeting is currently scheduled for June 11, 2020.
6. Adjourn

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Any disclosable public records related to an open session item on a regular meeting agenda and distributed by the County to a majority of members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Covid-19 Economic Impact and Recovery less than 96 hours prior to that meeting are available for public

inspection at 651 Pine Street, 10th floor, during normal business hours. Staff reports related to items on the agenda are also accessible on line at www.contracosta.ca.gov.

Public comment may be submitted via electronic mail on agenda items at least one full work day prior to the published meeting time.

For Additional Information Contact:

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Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

Subcommittee Report

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

Meeting Date: 06/04/2020
Subject: RECORD OF ACTION FOR MAY 28, 2020 MEETING
Submitted For: David Twa, County Administrator
Department: County Administrator

Referral No.:
Referral Name:

Presenter: Julie DiMaggio Enea **Contact:** Julie DiMaggio Enea
(925) 335-1077

Referral History:

County Ordinance requires that each County body keep a record of its meetings. Though the record need not be verbatim, it must accurately reflect the agenda and the decisions made in the meeting.

Referral Update:

Attached is the draft Record of Action for the May 28, 2020 meeting.

Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the May 28, 2020 meeting.

Fiscal Impact (if any):

No fiscal impact.

Attachments

DRAFT Record of Action for the May 28, 2020 Meeting



Agenda

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

May 28, 2020
1:00 P.M.

Supervisor Candace Andersen, Chair
Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, Vice Chair

Present: Candace Andersen, Chair
Karen Mitchoff, Vice Chair

Staff Present: Dr. Chris Farnitano, County Health Officer
Julie DiMaggio Enea, Senior Deputy County Administrator

1. Introductions

Chair Andersen called the meeting to order just after 1:00 p.m.

2. Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to two minutes).

The following individuals spoke during the general public comment:

- *Peter Connell spoke regarding the science behind masking during a virus and the risk of virus transmission at church, and was invited to hold his comments until later in the meeting when religious gatherings were scheduled for discussion.*
- *Joan Borchers spoke on behalf of young people involved in dance.*
- *Framework Fitness spoke with regard to fitness studios and the need for clear guidelines.*
- *Susan Morgan spoke on the need for education and understanding of the exemption from wearing face coverings by people with certain medical conditions, and how some of those individuals are suffering harassment due to that exemption.*
- *Gertrude Jeffries spoke on the harm caused by the lockdown in the county and that it outweighed the benefit.*
- *Joel Bryant asked the Board and County Health Officer to keep pace with the State Health Order and Governor's timeline.*
- *The person participating as "They Call Me Non-Essential" spoke regarding a spike in suicide deaths and how that should be a consideration in the pace of economic and social recovery.*
- *Robert Jackson commented on the need for clarity on providing outdoor exercise programs for those fitness businesses that have capacity to provide an outdoor venue*

- *Rick Campos spoke about his 44-acre outdoor venue and proposal to reopen certain activities on his property, requesting the County Supervisors to take a broader view than just the health effects of the virus.*
- *Patricia McBroom spoke about the co-housing community and how its pools should be in a separate category with different guidelines than public pools.*
- *Tricia commented about the need to reopen small businesses and how the focus on mental health has been eclipsed.*

Dr. Farnitano discussed some of the issues and questions raised:

Facial coverings: He explained that it is now understood by the medical community that the virus is most often transmitted by individuals who exhibit no symptoms and thea the CDC and Dept of Public Health all recommend facial coverings as a way to mitigate transmission of the virus. He acknowledged the exemption from this requirement for people with certain medical conditions and agreed that more education is needed about this exemption.

Dance: He explained that due to high risk, the State is now allowing indoor activities such as dance or gymnastics but may permit such outdoor activity if compliant with social distancing guidelines.

Fitness studios: He appreciates that the risks could be much easier to manage in a small studio than in a large gym, but has seen no specific guidance for fitness studios at the State level.

Suicide rate: He commented that economic recessions in general cause financial stress which leads to mental stress. The SIP is causing unique stresses in addition to the economic stress. HSD is currently examining the number of suicides and suicide attempts across the county and considers it a definite concern. Chair Andersen reminded attendees about the 211 suicide hotline and other available mental health resources. Vice Chair Mitchoff advised that the Sheriff would be gathering 24 mos of data and a report is forthcoming.

Outdoor dining, wineries, tasting rooms/outdoor seating: He said that seated dining was part of the State's Phase 3. This activity isn't currently allowed anywhere in the state - even in small rural counties. He believes that the lower risk outdoor dining will be allowed before inside dining.

What's next, following two weeks from the last order?: He explained that the new order may address expansion of childcare, office-based businesses, businesses that don't involve close contact, outdoor/open space activities and, for the future, how to begin approaching religious gatherings and indoor retail, which the State is only just beginning to address. He said they've been issuing new orders approximately every two weeks so that they can assess the effect of the changes on the key indicators. If the indicators continue to move in the right direction, we may see a new order as early as Tuesday, Jun 2, but would probably not take immediate effect. He clarified that the current order does not have an expiration date.

Cooperative housing swimming pools: He committed to seek clarification from the State to see if there is any discrete category for a shared housing pool.

Playgrounds: The two concerns are transmission through hard surfaces and child-to-child transmission. If the evidence supports changing the rules regarding playgrounds, they will reconsider.

Housecleaning: He said that they would be looking at relaxing restrictions on certain in-home services that do not involve close personal contact between individuals.

High school football: He explained that certain outdoor conditioning activities that do not involve shared equipment and close contact may be allowed, e.g. calisthenics, tossing a ball back and forth, and tennis. However, touch or tackle football, for example, would not be consistent with the health order.

Vice Chair Mitchoff clarified that the Board of Supervisors does not have authority to override the County Health Officer during a pandemic.

3. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the May 21, 2020 meeting.

The Committee took no action on the May 21, 2020 Record of Action.

4. CONSIDER the impacts of COVID-19 on religious gatherings and discuss pathways that may allow them to resume, if possible, within the limitations established by the County Health Officer.

Chair Andersen introduced the topic by announcing that the Governor has adopted guidelines for reopening faith services and houses of worship and that even if we cannot yet move to the full 100 person limit adopted by the State, perhaps we can devise local guidelines that would permit some level of -in-person fellowship and fulfillment of certain religious ordinances that cannot be done virtually.

The following people commented on the health order as it applies to religious gatherings:

- *Shawna Garvin spoke about the importance of sharing faith and perhaps allowing small stable church groups to meet in open spaces*
- *Wendy said it wasn't safe to re-open churches yet but agreed with Ms. Garvin about the importance of both religious and community fellowship, and requested the Health Officer to align our county with the State order.*
- *Chuck Jeffries said he is a member of a large church that has a large worship space. He said the 100 person limit is arbitrary and that people will begin to disregard the rule as unreasonable, which will create a more dangerous situation that adopting more sensible rules.*
- *Peter Connell said that several Sacramento restaurants were open last week. He spoke also about how certain science contradicts the health order guidelines on facial coverings. He perceives a contradiction between the rules applied to graduation ceremonies and church gatherings and wants to see churches reopened as soon as possible, following the State guidelines.*
- *Mike McDermott asked why the Health Officer must wait for Contra Costa data to determine when churches can reopen when data from surrounding counties that are ahead of us in recovery can provide that valuable contact*

trace data. He asked if gatherings in excess of 100 could overflow to outdoor areas?

- Joel Bryant cited an increase in residents reaching out for human connection and encouraged matching the county's recovery plan with the State's.*
- Jaren Thomsen thanked the County team and acknowledged their difficult position. He said the currently policies are too broad and don't allow religious leaders to properly support their congregations, and that the outdoor fitness model can be applied to religious gathering. Ditto with small home group gatherings. He asked for clarity on what he sees as discrepancies.*
- Barbara Csider commented about an uptick in the demand for free counseling services and how Zoom doesn't satisfy the need to human contact. She said that mental health impacts are being ignored in the pandemic environment and that church pastors should be given the discretion and responsibility for their congregations.*
- Michelle Campos commented that humans are created for connection and that adults can be trusted to make decisions for themselves. She believes that houses of worship should be classified as essential under the Health Order. She said if the County continues to prioritize science and data, then the number of suicides will outstrip the number of COVID-19 deaths.*
- Michael Wiseman spoke about the suicide rates and COVID-19 recovery and death rates. He asked the Health Officer to reconsider.*
- Kent Dresdow said that he has a 1200 person auditorium so the 100 person limit is overly restrictive in his case. He is looking for the 25% capacity of the room as a preferred standard. He is looking for a way to comply yet still consider his church's particular ability to comply with larger numbers.*
- Igor Skaredoff commended the Board of Supervisors on the open meeting process. He said it would be no trivial decision to loosen the health order and that the County's indicators are likely low due to the conservative approach to the virus. He thinks the stepwise fashion towards recovery is prudent due to the incubation period of the virus and that if we continue being prudent, we can all get through this without losing too many people along the way.*
- Stanley Gibson commented on the inflexibility of the rules and wanted to know how much discretion does the Health Officer have and who is being represented. He commented that under the rules, an outdoor athletic workout of less than ten is permitted but a religious gathering of the same number is not.*
- Robert commented about fairness between opening both churches and businesses. He wondered why allow mass gatherings of up to 100 but allow small businesses to flounder?*
- Denise Persa read a letter about the founding principles of the nation. She demanded protection of people's rights and that the government existed to serve the people.*
- Lisa spoke about the Supervisors' oath of office and duties to the people, and the Constitution as the supreme law of the land.*
- Paul Taylor commented that no act of government that is contrary to the Constitution is valid. He said the government is out of control and acting outside of its contract, and cannot force, no matter how good its intentions or under the guise of a pandemic, its people to wear masks, get vaccinated, close their business, etc.*
- Rochelle Conner asked if the County is knowingly acting under the*

Constitution or some other power. She asked if County officials understood the penalties for violating constitutional law and their oaths of office. She demanded that County officials honor their oaths and desist in violating people's constitutional rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, including property.

- *Scott Bennett advised that the County was being served legal notice of deprivation of rights under the color of law, Title 18 U.S. Code 241 Conspiracy of Rights and Code 242, and threatened civil and criminal prosecution under 42 U.S. Code 1983 and 1985.*

Vice Chair Mitchoff thanked everyone for their considered comments but said that any personal attacks on Dr. Farnitano were inappropriate and deconstructive. Dr. Farnitano is a public employee with no personal stake in the health order and is relying on his own qualifications as well as the advice of colleagues and other Bay Area health officials, and input from myriad business and community sectors in service to Contra Costa County. She explained that the Board represents all of the voices and not just the loudest voices or the voices in the room. She clarified that we are a representative government not a servant government, and the Board must take into account all of the information it receives and then make its best decision. People are welcome to disagree with the Board's decisions. She said the Supervisors are working very hard on behalf of Contra Costa County.

She commented that California is unlike any other state and we cannot simply rely on other states' data. She agreed that more consistency is needed among California counties with respect to attestations to recovery plan and its implementation. She said that the County doesn't meet three of the five indicators. Only 2/8 hospitals in the county meet the PPE indicator.

She feels personally the absence of church fellowship but must base her own decisions based on the welfare of everyone she represents. She committed to look at different ways to accommodate church services within the County's limited discretion under the State's current order.

Chair Andersen reiterated the importance of finding a way to allow faith-based groups to again come together sooner than later.

Dr. Farnitano thanked everyone who offered him their support and prayers, which he appreciates. He said that we passed two key milestones: 100,000 U.S. deaths with only 38 in Contra Costa despite the fact that Contra Costa's demographic is older; and 100,000 cases in California. If we applied the State per capita rate of infections to Contra Costa, we would have had twice as many cases -- 2,000+ cases instead of 1,000+ cases, despite the fact that we are more densely populated. We must look not only to our casualties but also the number of cases and deaths we likely prevented. The County is resuming and opening up services in a steady and methodical fashion.

He agrees that virtual worship services are not a great substitute for in-person services. He clarified and committed to updating the FAQs that one-on-one in-person spiritual counseling is permitted.

He said that he is looking seriously at indoor vs outdoor gatherings. While outdoor gatherings have less risk, there have still been outbreaks as a result of outdoor gatherings such as in Mendocino County.

He said that it is difficult to compare with other states' experience because there are so many factors that affect recovery. But they are studying other states and even other countries, trying to learn as much as possible about the virus and apply that knowledge to Contra Costa County.

He also mentioned that Contra Costa County's hospitalization and case rates may be understated because West County residents are often seen at Alameda County hospitals.

He also stated that while these decisions are ultimately his responsibility, he is not making them in a vacuum. He gets advice and input from forums like this committee, and from County Supervisors, city managers, a health department team, business owners, Bay Area health officers and State officials. We want to open up but do so safely.

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5. The next meeting is currently scheduled for June 4, 2020.

Chair Andersen concluded by saying that we're striving to find the new normal and feels confident that we can find a way to move forward safely.

The next meeting date was confirmed and the Supervisors discussed the next agenda topics, to include any new local health order and possible dance or of the businesses that have the least impact from the health perspective

6. Adjourn

Chair Andersen adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

For Additional Information Contact:

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Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

Subcommittee Report

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

Meeting Date: 06/04/2020
Subject: COVID-19 Recovery Road Map: Discussion of Provisions
of New Local Health Order
Submitted For: David Twa, County Administrator
Department: County Administrator
Referral No.:
Referral Name:
Presenter: **Contact:**

Referral History:

Although the Board of Supervisors has authority over County issues, under State law, when an emergency of this nature is declared and there is a pandemic of this magnitude, the Health Officer of each County has the legal authority to impose whatever orders she or he deem necessary to protect the public.

On Tuesday, April 21, the Board of Supervisors formed this ad hoc committee to advise the Health Department on COVID19 impacts. The goal of the committee is to work toward having a sustainable COVID-19 mitigation and recovery plan. The committee will be working with the community and industry on issues of concern, advising the Board of Supervisors and the Health Officer on possible ways to interpret and apply Health Orders so they will continue to keep the community safe, but allow more businesses to re-open and provide common-sense applications to outdoor activities.

The Committee has so far conducted four public meetings on May 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2020 covering recreation and lifestyle services, in-home and other personal services, small businesses, and religious gatherings. A record of those meetings is posted on the County website at this [link](#). The committee plans to continue meeting weekly, taking up issues related to different business/community sectors at each meeting. The Committee previously identified eight sectors to focus on over the course of the next several meetings:

1. Faith organizations
2. Recreation and Lifestyle
3. Restaurant
4. In-home and other personal services
5. RV/Park
6. Small businesses
7. Thrift sales & collection
8. Furniture

Referral Update:

Relevant Excerpts From the California Corona Virus Response Website:

Californians have been staying home and saving lives since the start of the statewide stay-at-home order issued on March 19, 2020. These efforts have allowed the state to move forward on its [roadmap](#) for modifying the statewide order.

STAGE 1: Safety and preparedness

Make workplaces safe for our essential workers.

STAGE 2: Lower-risk workplaces

Gradually reopen retail (curbside only), manufacturing & logistics. Later, relax retail restrictions, adapt & reopen schools, child care, offices & limited hospitality, personal services.

STAGE 3: Higher-risk workplaces

Adapt and reopen movie theaters, religious services, & more personal & hospitality services.

STAGE 4: End of Stay Home Order

Reopen areas of highest risk: e.g. Concerts, conventions, sports arenas.

When modifications are advanced and the state's [six indicators](#) show we've made enough progress, we can move to the next stage of the roadmap. Stage 2 expansion will be phased in gradually. Some communities may move through Stage 2 faster if they are able to show greater progress. Counties that have met the readiness criteria and worked with the California Department of Public Health can open more workplaces as outlined on the [County Variance page](#).

Industry guidance to reduce the risk

California will move into Stage 2 of modifying the state's Stay-at-Home order on May 8, 2020. Our progress in achieving key [public health metrics](#) will allow a gradual re-opening of California's economy. We recognize the impact of economic hardship. We must get our economy roaring once again and put paychecks in people's pockets. But the risk of COVID-19 infection is still real for all Californians and continues to be fatal. That is why every business should take every step humanly possible to reduce the risk of infection:

- Plan and prepare for re-opening
- Make radical changes within the workplace
- Adjust practices by employees and help educate customers

Below are [guidance](#) for each early Stage 2 business to follow. The goal is a safe, clean environment for workers and customers. Businesses may use effective alternative or innovative methods to build upon the guidance. Review the guidance that is relevant to your workplace, prepare a plan based on the guidance for your industry, and put it into action. When complete, you can post the industry-specific checklist (below) in your workplace to show your customers and your employees that you've reduced the risk and are open for business. Before reopening, all facilities must:

1. Perform a detailed risk assessment and implement a site-specific protection plan
2. Train employees on how to limit the spread of COVID-19, including how to [screen themselves for symptoms](#) and stay home if they have them
3. Implement individual control measures and screenings
4. Implement disinfecting protocols
5. Implement physical distancing guidelines

It is critical that employees needing to self-isolate because of COVID-19 are encouraged to stay at home, with sick

leave policies to support that, to prevent further infection in your workplace. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#).

The State describes high-risk workplaces/venues to include:

- Personal services such as nail salons, tattoo parlors, gyms and fitness studios
- Hospitality services, such as bars and lounges
- Entertainment venues, such as movie theaters, gaming facilities, and pro sports
- Indoor museums, kids museums and gallery spaces, zoos, and libraries
- Community centers, including public pools, playgrounds, and picnic areas
- Religious services and cultural ceremonies
- Nightclubs
- Concert venues
- Festivals
- Theme parks
- Hotels/lodging for leisure and tourism

Out-of-home personal services such as salons, and recreation and community facilities are generally categorized by the State as high-risk workplaces/venues, which could re-open with limitations at Stage 3 of the State's recovery road map.

It is unclear how at-home personal services are categorized and their category may depend on whether or not social distancing can be maintained and how much personal contact is required.

Community centers, public swimming facilities, picnic areas are included in the State's high-risk category and would not be permitted during Stage 2 of the recovery.

Today's Committee Meeting:

The current local Health Order in effect does not have an expiration date. It is anticipated that a new Health Order reducing Shelter in Place restrictions will be issued on Tuesday, June 2, and effective on Wednesday June 3. At this meeting we will be discussing the provisions of this new order.

Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

DISCUSS the provisions of the new Health Order reducing Shelter in Place restrictions that is expected to be issued on Tuesday, June 2, and effective on Wednesday, June 3.

Fiscal Impact (if any):

No fiscal impact. The Committee's meetings facilitate the exchange of information and ideas.

Attachments

[Update-on-California-Pandemic-Roadmap](#)

[LA Times News Article 5/29/2020 How LA County is Reopening](#)

[Bay Area News Group Article on CA Econ Recovery 5/27/2020](#)

[NY Times Article on CA Econ Recovery 5/26/2020](#)

[Reuters Article on U.S. Jobless Rate 5/26/2020](#)

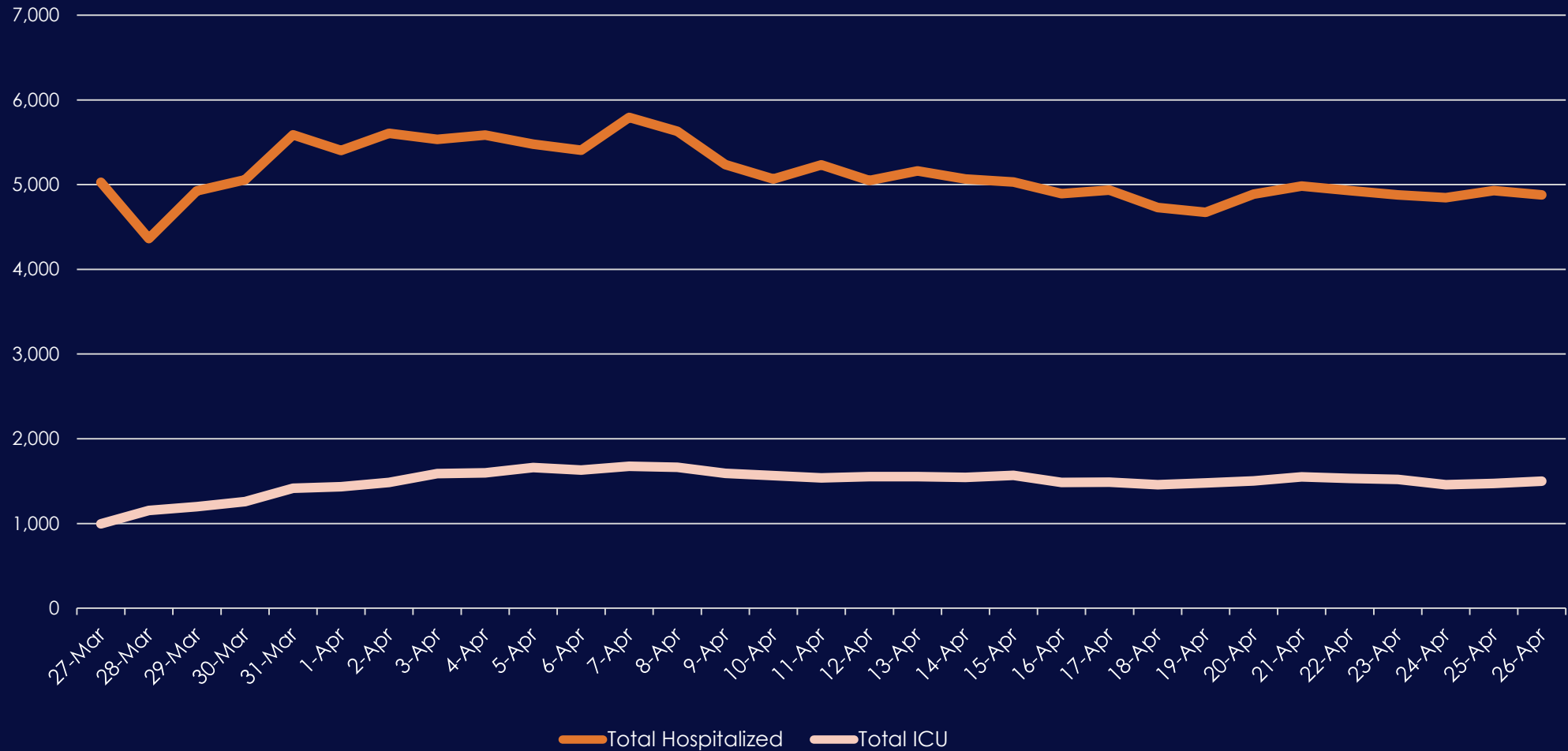


Update on California's Pandemic Roadmap

6 Indicators for Modifying Stay-at-Home Order

- Ability to test, contact trace, isolate, and support the exposed
- Ability to protect those at high risk for COVID-19
- Surge capacity for hospital and health systems
- Therapeutic development to meet the demand
- Ability of businesses, schools, and childcare facilities to support physical distancing
- Determination of when to reinstitute measures like Stay-At-Home

California Hospitalization Trend Lines



Total includes both COVID-19 confirmed positive hospitalizations as well as COVID-19 suspect hospitalizations.

The Basics



COVID-19 is not going away soon.



Modifications to Stay-At-Home Order must be guided by health risk and a commitment to equity.



Taking responsibility is key at all levels – individual, business, and government.

Resilience Roadmap Stages

STAGE 1: Safety and Preparedness

Making essential workforce environment as safe as possible.

STAGE 2: Lower Risk Workplaces

Creating opportunities for lower risk sectors to adapt and re-open.

Modified school programs and childcare re-open.

STAGE 3: Higher Risk Workplaces

Creating opportunities for higher risk sectors to adapt and re-open.

STAGE 4: End of Stay-At-Home Order

Return to expanded workforce in highest risk workplaces.

Requires
Therapeutics.

Stage 1: Safety and Preparedness

This is where we are now.

- **Continue to build out testing, contact tracing, PPE, and hospital surge capacity.**
- **Continue to make essential workplaces as safe as possible.**
 - Physical and work flow adaption
 - Essential workforce safety net
 - Make PPE more widely available
 - Individual behavior changes
- **Prepare sector-by-sector safety guidelines for expanded workforce.**

Stage 2: Lower Risk Workplaces

Gradually opening some lower risk workplaces with ADAPTATIONS:

- Retail (e.g. curbside pickup)
- Manufacturing
- Offices (when telework not possible)
- Opening more public spaces

Expanded Workforce Safety Net:

- Wage replacement so workers can stay home when sick

Stage 2: Lower Risk Workplaces

Schools and Childcare Facilities with Adaptations:

- Summer programs and next school year potentially starting sooner (July/August)
- Childcare facilities to provide more care
- Address learning gaps
- Ensure students and staff are protected
- Allow broader workforce to return to work

Actions needed to get from Stage 1 to Stage 2



Government Actions

- Policies that allow people to stay home when they're sick
- Guidance provided on how to reduce risk



Business Actions

- Wage replacement so workers can stay home when sick
- Implement adaptations to lower-risk workplaces NOW
- Employees continue to work from home when possible



Individual Actions

- Safety precautions – physical distancing, face coverings, etc.
- Avoid all non-essential travel
- Support and care for people who are at high risk

When are we ready for Stage 2?

Key indicator considerations to move to Stage 2:

- Hospitalization and ICU trends stable.
- Hospital surge capacity to meet demand.
- Sufficient PPE supply to meet demand.
- Sufficient testing capacity to meet demand.
- Contact tracing capacity statewide.

Transition to Stage 2 will occur through a statewide modification to the Stay-At-Home Order.

Opportunity for Regional Variations

During Stage 2, counties may choose to relax stricter local orders at their own pace.

Following Stage 2, once a statewide COVID-19 surveillance system is made possible through testing, further regional variations could be supported.

State will consult and collaborate closely with local governments.

Stage 3: Higher Risk Workplaces

Open higher risk environments with adaptations and limits on size of gatherings:

- Personal care (hair and nail salons, gyms)
- Entertainment venues (movie theaters, sports without live audiences)
- In-person religious services (churches, weddings)

Stage 4: End of Stay-At-Home Order

Re-open highest risk workplaces with all indicators satisfied once therapeutics have been developed:

- Concerts
- Convention Centers
- Live audience sports

Be Part of the Solution

Stay Home. Practice Physical Distancing.

We are enlisting all Californians to help inform the development of guidance for sectors across our economy.

This guidance will provide a framework for how to safely re-open.

CALIFORNIA

ALL

**Your Actions
Save Lives**

covid19.ca.gov

As L.A. County lifts COVID-19 restrictions, here's what is allowed to reopen and what remains closed

[Local News](#)

by: [KTLA Digital Staff](#)

Posted: May 29, 2020 / 04:19 PM PDT / Updated: May 29, 2020 / 04:30 PM PDT



People exit a Shoe City store in Glendale as Los Angeles County retail businesses reopen while the COVID-19 pandemic continues on May 27, 2020. (David McNew/Getty Images)

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Los Angeles County on Friday announced it was [easing more coronavirus-related restrictions](#) to allow restaurants to resume dine-in service, and hair salons and barbershops to reopen, signaling another important step toward the region's economic recovery.

The latest move came just days after the [county's health order was modified](#) to permit faith-based services and in-store shopping, as well as the reopening of drive-in movie theaters and some swimming pools.

Restrictions were relaxed even though the county remains the epicenter of California's COVID-19 outbreak, accounting for almost half of the [state's confirmed cases](#).

But strict modifications have been imposed on retailers and public spaces to further prevent the spread of COVID-19. The measures include social distancing and facial covering requirements, as well as limits on capacity and, in some cases, temperature screenings and other health checks. (Coronavirus-related health protocols can be found [here](#).)

More than two months from when the safer-at-home orders were enacted at the beginning of the public health emergency, the county — like much of the state — has accelerated through the second phase of [California's four-stage economic recovery plan](#).

While many sectors are operating once more, some still remain shuttered as the region works to repair the pandemic-induced economic damage. For instance, while public health officials allowed barbershops and hair salons to resume operations, nail salons and spa services are still not permitted under the health order.

Officials warned, however, that the L.A. County Department of Public Health could limit or close reopened sectors if there is a spike in cases.

“This is a fine line that we're walking in the County of Los Angeles,” county Supervisor Janice Hahn said in a statement. “We are threading the needle between keeping the public safe and allowing our economy to reopen.”

Here is what is currently open and what remains closed:

Open

Shopping, Restaurants, and Personal Care

- Grocery stores, certified farmers' markets, farm and produce stands, supermarkets, food banks, convenience stores, wholesale clubs, and pharmacies
- Pet food stores, animal daycare and boarding facilities, veterinary clinics and some pet grooming
- Businesses that sell necessities for the home, including hardware, building, home appliance and pool supply stores
- Retail stores, including those selling clothing, jewelry, furniture, toys and books
- Restaurants and cafes
- Hair salons and barbershops

Recreation, Entertainment, and Learning

- Parks (playgrounds remain closed)
- Public trails (walking and hiking)
- Beaches (for active-use and recreation only)
- Pools in multi-unit residential facilities (including apartments and condominiums)

- Golf courses
- Pickleball and tennis courts
- Horse riding/equestrian activities
- Bike parks
- Community gardens
- Model airplane areas
- Shooting and archery ranges
- Vehicle-based parades
- Drive-in movie theaters
- Libraries (curbside pickup only)
- Outdoor museums, open air galleries, botanical gardens, and other outdoor exhibition spaces

Health Care Services

- Clinics, hospitals, dental clinics, physical therapy and chiropractic offices, optometrists, mental or behavioral health providers, and other health care settings

Closed

Personal Care

- Nail salons
- Spa services, including massage, facials and waxing

Recreation, Entertainment, and Learning

- Beach piers
- Recreation and community centers
- Basketball and volleyball courts
- Baseball and soccer fields
- Youth sports leagues
- Gyms/fitness centers, including in multi-unit housing
- Public pools
- Indoor museums, galleries and zoos
- Bars and nightclubs that don't serve food
- Arcades, bowling alleys, movie theaters, live performance theaters, concert halls and other similar venues
- Stadiums, arenas, gaming facilities, theme parks, and festivals

Coronavirus: What is a V-shaped economic recovery and how likely is it really?

What about a W-shaped or L-shaped or checkmark-shaped recovery?



SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA – MARCH 24: The Crepe House on Polk Street is boarded up as the coronavirus shutdown enters its second week, Tuesday, March 24, 2020. (Karl Mondon/Bay Area News Group)

By [Leonardo Castañeda](#) | lcastaneda@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group

PUBLISHED: May 27, 2020 at 9:10 a.m. | UPDATED: May 27, 2020 at 3:09 p.m.

With Gov. Gavin Newsom further easing California's coronavirus restrictions, some economists are already talking about a speedy economic recovery.

The optimists call it a V-shaped recovery, in which the economy trampoline back up to normal as soon as lockdown restrictions are lifted. But others disagree about how likely that is, with some experts saying the coronavirus-induced recession is exposing deeper flaws in the U.S. economy.

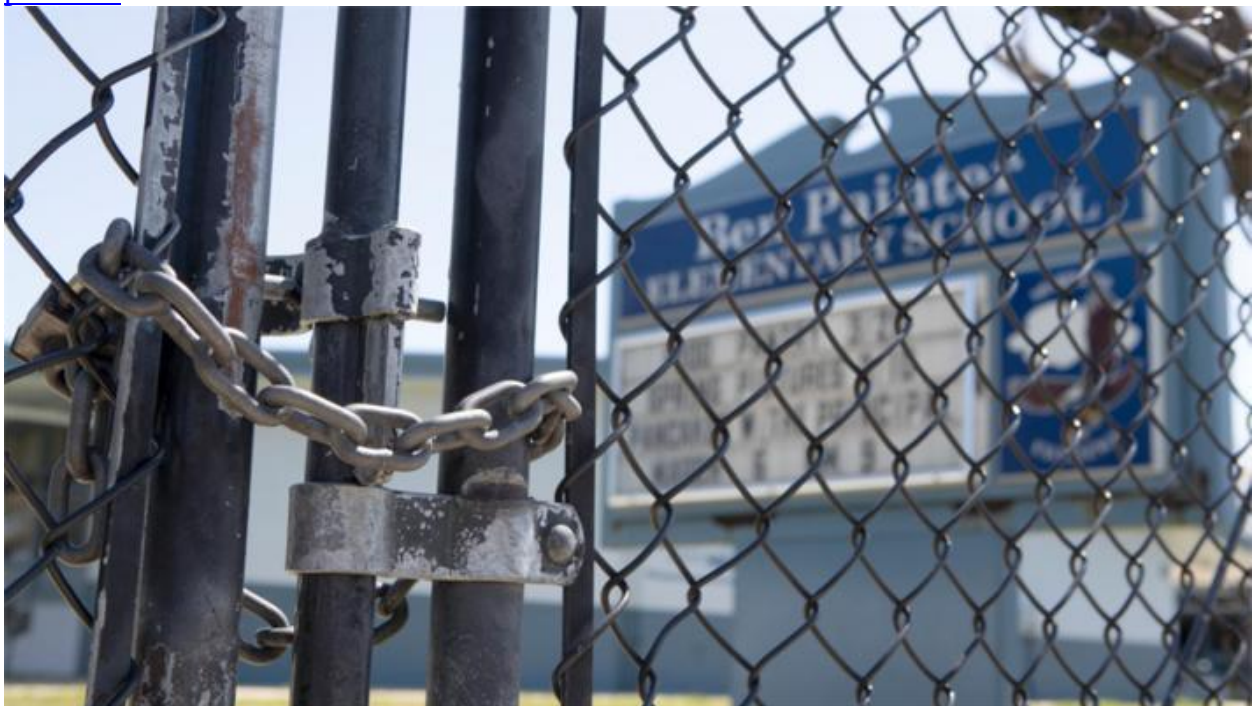
The idea of a V-shaped recovery is simple: once the economy hits its lowest point and lockdown restrictions on businesses are lifted, workers will get rehired and shoppers will flock to stores like they did before COVID-19 — but with more social distancing and masks.

“You’ll bounce back and your recovery will be as steep as your decline,” said Jack Rasmus, an economics professor at St. Mary’s College. “In other words, you’ll gain back everything you lost.”



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But the likelihood of that happening is dependent on whether this is purely a coronavirus-driven economic slowdown.

“My view on that is, nonsense,” he said.

The economy will maybe bounce back some, he said, but not enough to make up for the 30 to 40 percent decline in GDP that some analysts, including the nonpartisan [Congressional Budget Office](#), are predicting for the second quarter of 2020. Customers, he said, are not going to flood back into stores, restaurants and car dealerships. Airlines and hotels will take a long time to return to normal, and companies such as JC Penney and Neiman Marcus that were already teetering are starting to collapse. Only one in 10 global fund managers are anticipating a V-shaped bounceback, according to the [Financial Times](#).

Rasmus and others say the crisis has accelerated and worsened existing economic fault lines, like the decline in U.S. manufacturing, the trade war with China, and an all-time high in Americans’ personal [credit card debt](#) even before the crisis. Plus, history suggests we could be in for a second wave of infections, which could prompt another round of shutdowns.

“There’s nothing on the horizon that suggests a robust economy, let alone a V-shaped recovery,” Rasmus said.

Chris Thornberg, founding partner at Beacon Economics, said the case for a quick recovery is obvious.

“When the mandates go away, people get back to work,” Thornberg said.

Restaurants that closed will reopen, and people who are still working — despite almost unprecedented unemployment rates, 84.5 percent of California workers still have a job — have built up savings that they’ll spend as soon as they can. Americans’ [personal savings rate](#) in March was the highest in 39 years. Even workers who lost their jobs are protected by a weekly

There’s no sustained damage to the economy from the virus, Thornberg said, unlike during the Great Recession when the entire financial system buckled and major lending institutions either went bankrupt or required massive federal bailouts.

“Everything says we’re already on the rebound, it’s already happening,” he said. “The faster the government gets out of the way, the better off we’ll be.”

A V-shaped recovery is not the only possibility. There’s a U-shaped recovery, in which the economy slowly picks up over years after hitting a low point. There’s the checkmark or swoosh recovery, which is essentially a slower V-shaped recovery. Then there’s the L-shaped model where the economy never recovers to pre-recession levels.

Rasmus favors another alternative: the W-shaped recovery. That’s essentially what happened after the 2008 Great Recession.

“There’ll be ups and there’ll be downs,” he said. “But this is going to take years to recover.”

CALIFORNIA TODAY

What's Ahead for California's Economy?

Tuesday: Experts weigh in. Also: State leaders make good on Gov. Gavin Newsom's promise to set rules for reopening houses of worship.

By [Jill Cowan](#), [Tim Arango](#) and [Thomas Fuller](#)

May 26, 2020



The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels was without its congregation on Holy Friday in April. Damian Dovarganes/Pool, AP, via Associated Press

Good morning.

(Don't already get California Today by email? Here's the sign-up.)

On Monday, state public health officials announced that houses of worship could reopen across the state, following Gov. Gavin Newsom's reassurances Friday that guidelines for doing so were in the works.

That announcement came in apparent response to pressure from religious leaders and the president to allow in-person services.

The new guidelines say that religious or cultural ceremonies — including funerals — can take place with county health department approval, and in buildings limited to 25 percent capacity or 100 people, whichever is lower.

The guidance also requires that places of worship establish an infection prevention plan and try to minimize or eliminate, if possible, singing or group recitations, which can spread coronavirus droplets increasing others' risk.

In 21 days, officials said, the state will re-evaluate the restrictions.

Retail stores were also allowed to open their doors to customers statewide under the same guidelines that public health officials previously released for the counties moving more quickly through the reopening process.

[Read more about the stages of California's plan to gradually reopen.]



A laundromat along historic Route 66 on May 22 in Barstow. Mario Tama/Getty Images

Now, here's an update on the California economy from my colleagues [Tim Arango](#) and [Thomas Fuller](#) :

Many of the strengths of the California economy — its role as a hub for commerce, tourism and education in the Pacific Rim — have become liabilities during the pandemic-induced recession. That was one of the conclusions of an article we wrote about the tough road ahead for the California economy.

As part of our reporting we spoke to members of Governor Newsom's economic recovery task force. Some predicted that the economic damage would most likely provoke a debate about the state's tax structure. Many were concerned about the duration of the crisis and the consequences for people who were only just recovering financially from the previous recession.

[Read the full story about California's economic future here .]

Former Gov. **Jerry Brown** recalled his prediction, during his last budget presentation in 2018, for what lay ahead after so many years of economic expansion in California: "darkness, decline, uncertainty and recession."

Mr. Brown invoked the state's reliance on the earnings of wealthy residents, which means that in the face of a downturn, when the wealthy earn less from capital gains as markets tumble, tax revenues can drop suddenly.

[See how many coronavirus cases are in each California county .]

"Because of the heavy reliance on income tax from higher incomes, it's very volatile in California," Mr. Brown said. "The swings are pretty big."

Former governors **Gray Davis**, a Democrat, and **Pete Wilson**, a Republican, advised Mr. Newsom to expansively exercise his emergency powers to get things done quickly.

Mr. Wilson invoked the rebuilding of the I-10 freeway after the 1994 Northridge earthquake and what he said was the importance of suspending certain rules and bureaucracy for development.

Latest Updates: Coronavirus Outbreak in the U.S.

- [The White House sets conditions on testifying before Congress as the virus's partisan divide widens.](#)
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- [New York City moves toward reopening.](#)

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For **Tom Steyer**, the former presidential candidate who is heading Mr. Newsom's task force, California faces a crisis very distinct from the recession caused by the 2008 housing collapse.

“We are just at the front end of this,” Mr. Steyer said of the current crisis. “2008 was a bank-leveraged-based recession. And here we are talking about something completely different. It’s an economic free-fall. To compare the two is comparing apples and oranges.”

[Read a conversation with Tom Steyer .]

The current recession will have a “permanent impact,” Mr. Steyer said. “It accelerates trends that were in place and it breaks things,” he said referring to inequalities that worsened over the past decade

Mr. Steyer sees California relying both on its people and technology to emerge from the recession

“I think we’re going to be well positioned based on our ability to have the strongest work force in the world and the strongest information technology in the world,” he said.

Janet Yellen , the former chair of the Federal Reserve (as well as former head of the San Francisco Fed), said she was skeptical of the view that the economy will “snap back.”

“I personally don’t think that’s what’s likely to happen,” she said.

What will be crucial both for California and the country as a whole is the duration of the pandemic, she said.

“If this lasts a long time, bad things happen,” Ms. Yellen said, referring to the banking system and the ability of companies to weather the downturn.

Ann O’Leary , chief of staff to Mr. Newsom who is also co-chair of the economic recovery task force, said the recession would reveal the “leaks” in California’s safety net.

The Coronavirus Outbreak >

Today’s Question: My state is reopening. Is it safe to go out?

States are reopening bit by bit . This means that more public spaces are available for use and more and more businesses are being allowed to open again. The federal government is largely leaving the decision up to states, and some state leaders are leaving the decision up to local authorities. Even if you aren’t being told to stay at home, it’s still a good idea to limit trips outside and your interaction with other people.

“People could not afford to live in California and now they are impacted all the more,” she said.

[Read more about who’s likely to become unemployed as a result of the pandemic.]

It was a point also made by **Manuel Pastor** , another member of the task force and a professor of sociology and economics at the University of Southern California.

“This disease has revealed our sickness, meaning all the pre-existing conditions of a lack of health insurance, of precarity in the economy, the insecurity of legal status in the country,” Professor Pastor said.

“This is clearly an opportunity to both address what we need to do in the short term, but also to think not so much about recovery, although that’s the name of the task force, but how do we reimagine a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable economy?”

Here’s what else you may have missed over the weekend

We often link to sites that limit access for nonsubscribers. We appreciate your reading Times coverage, but we also encourage you to support local news if you can.

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The New York Times

- Imagine a city of 100,000 that was here on New Year’s Day now almost completely wiped off the map. On Sunday, **The Times printed just some of the names of the nearly 100,000 Americans who have died in the pandemic** . Spend some time learning about them. [The New York Times]
- Americans hit the beaches for a subdued **Memorial Day** . [The New York Times]
- What does the pandemic tell us about the political map? **More people are dying where Democrats live.** [The New York Times]
- **Are the SAT and the ACT tests useful yardsticks** or a “proxy for privilege?” Dig into the debate. The New York Times]
- **Mayors of almost all of Orange County’s 34 cities plan to ask county supervisors to let cities dole out \$75 million in federal money** to help small businesses. County officials have denied them once before. [The Orange County Register]
- A four-alarm blaze that drew 150 firefighters **destroyed a quarter of the structures on San Francisco’s Pier 45** early on Saturday morning. [The New York Times]
- **Restaurants and delivery apps are fighting over fees** . Some cities, like Los Angeles, are capping them. [Marketplace]
- Bar doormen using contact-tracing apps, private dining rooms, food delivery with branded restaurant swag **Experts talk through the speculative future of drinking and dining** . [The San Francisco Chronicle]
- Though **it would be easy to categorize House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s masks — coordinated with her suits** — as just fun, the statement is more nuanced. [The New York Times]

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Jill Cowan grew up in Orange County, went to school at U.C. Berkeley and has reported all over the state, including the Bay Area, Bakersfield and Los Angeles — but she always wants to see more. Follow along [here](#) or on [Twitter](#) .

California Today is edited by Julie Bloom, who grew up in Los Angeles and graduated from U.C. Berkeley.

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BUSINESS NEWS MAY 28, 2020 / 5:53 AM / A DAY AGO

U.S. weekly jobless claims drop, but economic recovery still elusive

Lucia Mutikani

5 MIN READ



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The number of Americans seeking jobless benefits fell for an eighth straight week last week, likely as some people returned to work, but claims remained at astonishingly high levels, suggesting it could take the economy a while to rebound as businesses reopen.

The Labor Department's weekly jobless claims report on Thursday, the most timely data on the economy's health, also showed a decline in the number of people

receiving unemployment checks in mid-May. The data, however, excludes gig workers and others collecting benefits under a federal government program.

These workers do not qualify for the regular state unemployment insurance. The various programs, different reporting periods and protocols at state unemployment offices make it hard to get a clear pulse on the labor market.

Economists said the government's Paycheck Protection Program, part of a historic fiscal package worth nearly \$3 trillion, which offered businesses loans that could be partially forgiven if they were used for employee salaries, was also creating confusion.

"We are entering the confusion stage for the employment and unemployment numbers," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economics in Holland, Pennsylvania. "Reopening of the economy is taking people from government payrolls to private sector payrolls, which is good. But the PPP is creating problems with understanding what exactly is happening."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits fell 323,000 to a seasonally adjusted 2.123 million for the week ended May 23, the Labor Department said. Claims have declined steadily since hitting a record 6.867 million in late March, but have not registered below 2 million since mid-March.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast initial claims falling to 2.1 million in the latest week. Layoffs persist in the insurance, educational services, public administration, transportation and warehousing, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and retail trade industries.

The astonishingly high level of claims, nearly three months after the shuttering of non-essential businesses to control the spread of COVID-19, points to a long recovery for the economy.

FILE PHOTO: A handful of pedestrians walk through Times Square as streets remain relatively quiet due to the continuing outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the Manhattan borough of New York U.S., May 5, 2020. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson/File Photo

That was underscored by other data from the Commerce Department on Thursday showing business spending on equipment plummeting in April and the economy contracting at a much steeper 5.0% annualized rate in the first quarter instead of the previously estimated 4.8% pace.

Data in hand, including on the housing market, manufacturing and consumer spending has left economists expecting gross domestic product could drop in the second quarter at as much as a 40% rate, the worst since the Great Depression.

Stocks on Wall Street were trading higher, but simmering tensions between the United States and China kept investors on edge. The dollar eased against a basket of currencies. U.S. Treasury prices dipped.

LONG-TERM DAMAGE

A record 40.767 million people filed claims since March 21.

“We think these filings in the 10 weeks since the mid-March coronavirus pandemic lockdown tells the true story of the wreckage out there in the country and the enormous long-term damage done to the economy,” said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at MUFG in New York.

The number of people still receiving unemployment benefits after an initial week of aid dropped 3.860 million to 21.052 million in the week ending May 16. The so-called continuing claims number is reported with a week lag.

Economists cautioned against reading too much into the sharp decline, noting that some states required residents to file for benefits on a bi-weekly basis, which they said was injecting volatility into the data. The drop in continuing claims was concentrated in Florida, California, Washington State and Ohio.

“We doubt this is due to hiring and may reflect more the fact the continuing claims numbers are state benefits and don’t include the people claiming the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance,” said James Knightley, chief international economist at ING in New York.

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program is the federal government initiative that pays unemployment checks to gig workers and many others for coronavirus-related job and income losses.

These workers do not qualify for regular state unemployment insurance and are not included in both the weekly jobless claims and continuing claims figures. There were 1.193 million claims submitted last week under the PUA program, on top of the 7.793 million applications processed in the week ending May 9.

FILE PHOTO: A pedestrian walks past b...

Including gig workers and other claimants, a staggering 31 million people were receiving benefits under all programs in early May.

The continuing claims data covered the period during which the government surveyed households for May's unemployment rate.

Continuing claims increased roughly by 3 million between the April and May survey periods, suggesting a rise in the jobless rate from a post-World War Two record of 14.7% last month.

Reporting by Lucia Mutikani; Editing by Chizu Nomiyama and Andrea Ricci

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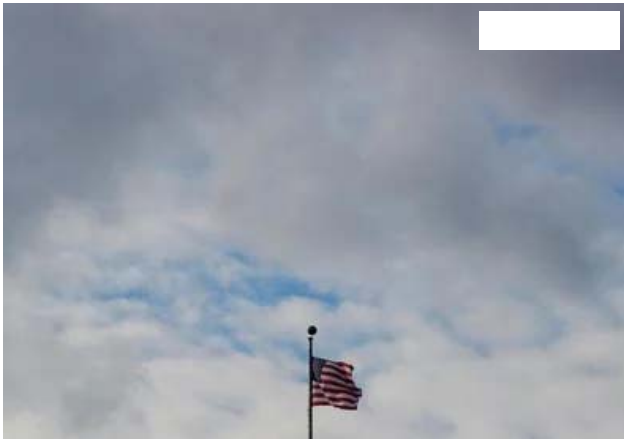
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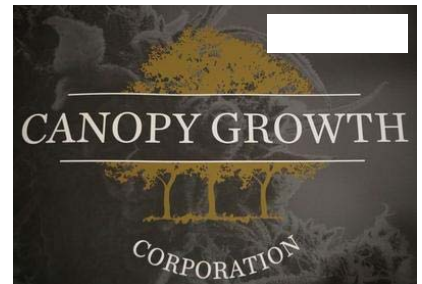
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