



# AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

THE RECORD OF ACTION FOR  
FEBRUARY 18, 2021

Supervisor Candace Andersen, Chair  
Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, Vice Chair

Present: Chair Candace Andersen  
Vice Chair Karen Mitchoff

Staff Present: Thomas Warne, M.D., Deputy County Health Officer  
Julie DiMaggio Enea, Senior Deputy County Administrator

Attendees: Lynn Mackey, County Superintendent of Schools  
See Attendance Record, attached.

## 1. Introductions

*Chair Andersen called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., introduced the Committee members, the Deputy County Health Officer and the County Superintendent of Schools, and explained the format of the meeting.*

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

*All public comment was taken under Agenda Item #3.*

## 3. RECEIVE status report on the County's COVID-19 status, the County's vaccination allocation framework, and school re-openings.

*Dr. Warne Introduced himself and described his background as Deputy Health Officer for the county and a primary care physician at West county Health Center in San Pablo.*

*He reviewed the current dashboard statistics; the case rate is 15.2 new cases per day per 100,000 and the test positivity rate is 4.3%. We have vaccinated 238,955, which is almost a quarter of the county's goal to distribute 1 million vaccinations by July 4<sup>th</sup>. He notes that these numbers have fallen dramatically from our Winter peak and continue to decrease. He attributes this to the use of face masks, physical distancing, and stay at home orders.*

*In order for schools to re-open, less than 25 cases per day for 5 consecutive days was needed, we met this requirement in early January. Overall cases in the County are 61,000. There has been a gradual decline in cases per day. We are at just over 200*

*per day now.*

*Dr. Warne reviewed case rates by town/city and highlighted that case rates have fallen substantially even in the worst hit communities. Bay Point and San Pablo continue to have the highest case rates. We see rates as high as 10X that of the least affected communities in the county.*

*There was a moderate surge in hospitalizations in January, but hospitals were able to flex within their walls to provide for patients. Dr. Warne states that this is testament to our health care system. There are currently 127 ICU beds occupied and 41 available. This number varies according to need.*

*He said he expects to see an increase in vaccine supply but has seen a temporary decrease in the past few weeks. Dr. Warne states that the supply is not yet robust enough for the county given that we have the capacity to deliver about 30,000 vaccines per week. We remain a leader amongst the biggest counties in California in terms of vaccinations.*

*About 28% of vaccines have gone to those 65-74 and about 32% have gone to those 75 and older. About 50% of that age group that are eligible have gotten the vaccine.*

*The hardest hit communities have seen relatively lower rates of vaccinations. Supervisor Anderson pointed out that this could be due to the large number of older individuals and health care workers in certain areas. We know that Bay Point has the lowest vaccine rate, yet, is one of the most impacted communities.*

*Dr. Warne updates that there will be a shift in the way that vaccines are allocated. The state will be using a third-party administrator, Blue Shield, in hopes of increasing vaccination rates statewide. The goal is to administer 3 million a week across the state by March 1<sup>st</sup>. This will impact the county since it is currently managing allocation, but will remain very involved. This shift will likely happen in mid March. We are continuing to encourage people to make appointments on the county website, but this will shift over to the state website MyTurn.*

*The federally run vaccination site at the Oakland Coliseum is now open and can administer up to 6,000 shots per day, appointments can be made through MyTurn. This will be an additional resource for county residents.*

*We will continue to place schools in different risk tiers and use CDC recommendations on how to conduct school within those tiers. We have reached the point where tk-6 schools can reopen with appropriate safety plans. Middle and High Schools can reopen when we are in the red tier. Supervisor Anderson notes that we will be opening up vaccine administration to educators and other essential workers.*

*Dr. Warne went on to discuss the phases we have gone through and reiterated that we will need more supply. Vice Chair Mitchoff noted that the lack of supply has been in part due to the weather in the US that has prevented transportation of vaccines. Dr. Warne states that the release of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may boost supply.*

*He responded to several questions that were received in advance of the meeting:*

- *Are there any rumblings that the tier system is being eliminated? Dr. Warne explained that he has not heard discussions that would lead him to believe that it would be eliminated in the near future. The tier system has worked well and has allowed the county to increase or decrease restrictions in ways that are predictable and consistent.*
- *Do you know when they plan to drop the need for quarantine after traveling out of the area? Dr. Warne explained that there has been no word on this yet. It is a state recommendation. It is a strong recommendation and serves as guidance but is not an order. The state is discouraging travel for tourism and recreation. If travel is necessary, it is recommended that you self-quarantine for 10 days and always use face coverings and practice physical distancing while traveling outside of the state.*
- *Will the travel ban be lifted for youth sports in California? Has the Health Department heard anything from the state regarding youth sports? Dr. Warne explained that he has heard discussions from the state regarding the loosening of guidelines for both youth and adult sports. This has not been announced and is not final yet, but we do expect to see further guidance in the future. Changes will likely include the allowance of certain sports in more restrictive tiers. This may depend on case rates in the area, parental consent, and testing processes.*
- *What is the projection for moving into the red tier? Dr. Warne explained that test positivity rates have dropped but the case rate is still higher than what is needed to move into the red tier. We need to get below 7 case rates per 100,000 individuals for 2 weeks in order to move into the red tier. Optimistically, we may be moving into the red tier in about 3-4 weeks from now.*
- *When is the governor going to transition into age-based vaccination groups and how does this impact the essential worker group? Dr. Warne explained that while the state has not updated future plans for vaccination phases, there have been discussions that the state plans to move into a primarily age-based approach.*
- *Why is mid usd struggling when so many other districts are opening? Dr. Warne explained that the school board makes the decisions on how and when to open. The Health department is here to assist in any way they can.*
- *There was a question about self service at convenience stores. Dr. Warne explains that the county does not have specific guidelines on this, we defer to state guidance for the industry sector. He believes self-service kiosks are generally prohibited*
- *How common are variants in our county? What are the impacts of those variants on immunity and vaccines? Dr. Warne explained that we are not strongly affected by these variants in our county and have not had any cases of the UK, South African, or Brazil variance. The UK variant, B117-UK, is a mutation of COVID that is highly transmissible and infective. There are also concerns that it could result in more severe disease and that vaccines could be less protective against variants. It continues to be important to keep our guard up despite recent gains.*

*Lynn Mackey provided an update on changes in County schools opening status and shared that 9 schools submitted plans to open while in the purple tier. She noted that many districts throughout the county have plans to reopen as well as tentative*

*opening dates on their respective websites. She states that reopenings are going well.*

*Chair Andersen invited public comment and gave instructions:*

- Mike McDermott asked about new work categories that will be opened up for vaccines, specifically education and childcare workers. Will this include anybody who is working at a school? How are you qualifying people for this category? Dr. Warne states that anyone working in a student-facing situation would certainly qualify. He lists the states qualifications and says that it is broad and comprehensive in terms of who qualifies within education and childcare.*
- Anoushka had a question in regards to sports; are supervisors in line with the state recommendations on this subject? During the last Ad Hoc meeting, there was a comment about the doctors who wrote a letter. She requested that a public statement be made stating that they were incorrect on three points; no one responded to the doctors, the date was not refuted, and that Ms. Miichoff stated that the doctor's backed down when they were in fact just waiting on a reply. She also requested that the concerns in their January 23<sup>rd</sup> letter be addressed. Chair Anderson stated that a letter was sent last week in response to the doctors written by Dr. Farnitano. She stated that they would send a copy of that letter to anyone who wants it. We will not create new guidelines; we will go by the state guidelines. Dr. Warne states that he cannot speak to what exactly will be in the guidelines, but it has been discussed that sports will be allowed in more restrictive tiers. The county plans to follow state recommendations and guidelines. The letter was responded to last week. At the county level, we do rely on the body of expertise on the federal level in terms of the best approaches. In this case, it is clear that PCR tests are the gold standard. Certainly, false positives can be a factor but it is a small factor and they are very accurate. This is governed by expert authorities at the federal level.*
- Mindy Gonzalez asked if our county was going to stick to state guidelines and not try to make more strenuous guidelines. She stated that CDC spacing is also a guideline not a mandate. Where does the county stand on this guideline of spacing given that it is not a mandate? Are the academic metrics can be expected to be met in regards to standardized testing and how will learning loss be addressed in our community? Lynn states that there is a bit of latitude as far as spacing. For students, it is 4 feet and adults need to be 6 feet apart. Schools have opened earlier without that spacing. It is an option for schools to submit a plan with other safety measures that have less than 4 feet of space to be reviewed by the state. We have been communicating about outdoor education. There is debate around state testing, we will be hearing more about this. Lynn states that she does not think mandated state testing is a priority. There have been other discussions as to how to mitigate learning loss. More information on this can be found on the State Hub.*
- 666-6666 had multiple questions. When will we stop wearing masks? Do any of you have any reservations about taking the vaccine? Do you intend to get the shot soon? Suppose teachers do not want to get the shots, is there room in our society for people who have misgivings and refuse the shot? The students have a choice to stay at home in San Ramon and many HS opted to stay at home, is this on the teachers to ensure that all high school students are following regulations? How many people have been hospitalized with the flu since*

*October? I read the other day that it was 165. Dr Warne explained that we cannot predict when we will stop wearing masks and we know that they have been highly effective in reducing transmission. It has been a powerful tool in containment and know that these measures have saved lives. He also states that there are certainly room in society for those who do not get the shots, although we will be strongly encouraging people to get shots. He has gotten both of his shots. There will not be exclusion based on vaccination status. Cannot provide how many people have been hospitalized with the flu since October, that information typically isn't tracked at the county level. We do know that the flu season has been much less severe this season. Lynn states that she has not been vaccinated given that this is the first day that educators are able to sign up but does not have hesitancy towards it. Students will not be forced to go back to school. Karen states that she has been vaccinated as well since she is over 65.*

- Jerry wanted to follow up on the Becton wedding, he requests it be condemned after going after businesses and fining people for defying regulations. Vice Chair Mitchoff responded that both Candace and herself were critical of the DA. None of the supervisors knew about the situation before it happened. Chair Anderson came out very strongly that she was frustrated that the DA did move forward with the wedding. We do not have the ability to discipline an elected official but it was not a good judgment. Relative to Ms. Becton, Vice Chair Mitchoff clarified that she was smirking at the situation, not the question, and is very frustrated with the DA.*
- Dorothy attempted to ask a question in regards to whether or not pre-school teachers would be able to get vaccinated. Supervisor Anderson stated that they are eligible to get vaccinated.*
- Shelly wanted to take the time to thank supervisor Anderson and reiterate how important it is to get our teachers vaccinated.*
- Kristen Burkhardt wanted to draw attention that the Oakley school district had quite a debacle of a meeting last night and was wondering what the county can do to hold these districts accountable? She states that she has pleaded their case to the district and union and questions what the county can do to assist? Lynn did hear about Oakley board meeting. If three people resign, they can assign county board members in interim. She states that she cannot talk specifically about that, but will be looking into it. She wants to support those board members and try to get schools open.*
- 555-5555- As a teacher, I don't want to get the shot and do not think it's beneficial for me. If I don't want to get the shot as a teacher, I shouldn't have to. She states that people should have their choice to receive the shot. Is there room in our society to disagree and not get the shot? Dr. Warren states that we certainly want to provide access for all teachers to get vaccinated if they want to. CDC stated that vaccination of teachers should not be a prerequisite for opening schools. We know that greater delivery and access of vaccines along with other prevention measures are necessary in order to make it a safe environment for everyone. We see it as an important tool but will not force anyone to get the vaccine.*

*Vice Chair Mitchoff reiterated the importance of this subject and the supervisors' continued attention to the community.*

4. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the January 21, 2021 meeting.

*The Committee approved the Record of Action for the January 21, 2021 meeting as presented.*

AYE: Chair Candace Andersen, Vice Chair Karen Mitchoff

Passed

5. The next meeting is currently scheduled for March 18, 2021.

*Chair Andersen confirmed the next meeting date as noticed.*

6. Adjourn

*Chair Andersen adjourned the meeting at 3:21 p.m.*

For Additional Information Contact:

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