



AD HOC COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT AND RECOVERY

THE RECORD OF ACTION FOR
APRIL 15, 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: See Attendance Record, attached.

1. Introductions

Chair Andersen welcomed everyone, provided some brief COVID updates, explained the format for the meeting, and introduced the Committee and Dr. Warne. See attached list of meeting attendees.

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 and vaccination framework and DISCUSS prospects for holding public and private events in the County in 2021.

Dr. Warne introduced himself as a primary care physician at the West County Health Center and also public health communicable disease.

He announced that there were many new updates from State and on the vaccine front. He reviewed the County's COVID data dashboard and reported good news in terms of our trajectory and success in controlling the virus. He contrasted California with the Northeast and Midwest U.S., Canada, and other parts of the world that have gone back under lockdowns due to coronavirus variants.

California has been more conservative in terms of lifting restrictions and it has paid off, as we are in a much better situation so far by not having a new wave of infections.

Contra Costa's case rate is 5.9 and has been flat as compared to a rate of 62 during the winter surge. Our positivity rate is 1.8% and trending down; our equity metric is 2.5%. Last week, Contra Costa County graduated to the Orange Tier.

Cumulative cases number 66,750, adding about 1,000 last week, but the increase in cases has slowed to 60-100 cases per day, down from 1,000 cases per day in January.

Virus hot spots are El Sobrante, Rodeo, Bay Point, Antioch and Crockett, but San Pablo is no longer in the highest spot.

The County is still doing a lot of testing, about 4,000-8000 daily, M-Th.. There are still cases of infections in people who have been vaccinated, so it is important to continue to test and take precautions.

There have been 767 deaths but none since early April.

Hospitalizations currently number 35, the 7-day average is 32 as compared to a previous high of 300. ICUs are not substantially impacted right now. About 10% of ICU cases right now are coronavirus.

Total cases for Long Term Care facilities is 3,383, hospitalizations of 576, deaths numbered 319. Current outbreaks of five, down from 55 during the surge.

875,000 doses of vaccine have been administered in our county, close to the goal of one million. Total first doses of 61% of eligible population or 566,000 doses. 37% or 342,000 have been fully vaccinated. 12,000-17,000 doses administered per day. Capacity is there but supply has been limited.

90%+ of the 65 and older population has been vaccinated. Dr. Warne is hoping for a good uptick in all age bands. Last week, the County just opened to 16+ age band a week ahead of the State.

Dr. Warne acknowledged a continuing equity gap, with lower rates of vaccination in Latino and Black Americans. The gap is driving much of CCHS's efforts in providing mobile teams and pop-up clinics, working with community ambassadors.

The Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine has been paused due to concerns about safety due to occurrence of Cerebral Sinovenous Thrombosis (CSVT, blood clots). This is a very rare reaction but has happened more commonly following the J&J vaccine than in the general population. Six persons out of 6 million have had this condition following a J&J vaccination. Out of caution, it is being paused for further investigation. It has been only a small part of Contra Costa's vaccination program. Out of 120 doses, only 7% was planned to be J&J so, relatively, a small percent of total. Contra Costa has administered 13,000 J&J doses; there have been some side effects but not CSVT. Questions should be referred to individual health care providers or County hotlines.

Dr. Warne said the County has invested resources in reducing barriers to vaccination by rolling out mobile clinics, available April 15-25 in Richmond, Antioch, Pittsburg, and Concord, and starting trials of walkup clinics. Open scheduling is now available on the County's website.

New state guidance documents and updated blueprint tiers have been released with

changes for gatherings and fully vaccinated people.

For fully vaccinated people doing non-work activities: they can spend time indoors with other fully vaccinated people without wearing masks or socially distancing. Vaccinated people can spend time indoors with unvaccinated people if the individuals are otherwise low-risk and limited to one other household. Vaccinated people are no longer required to quarantine unless they themselves are experiencing COVID symptoms. Vaccinated people should continue to take precautions in public such as masking and physically distancing and need to follow CDPH guidance for gatherings.

Dr. Warne provided a comprehensive review the April 2 State Blueprint for a Safer Economy, effective April 15, which has been substantially expanded for the Orange Tier.

[view-source:https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/#tier-assignments](https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/#tier-assignments)

Social gathering indoors is discouraged in favor of outdoor gathering. Food and drink should be limited to outdoor gatherings. High-risk individuals should continue to avoid gatherings.

Dr. Warne responded to questions asked in advance of the meeting:

- Can communities have movies/concerts in the park this summer? Yes, if they conform to the state guidance, e.g., masking, no serving of food, separation between households.*
- As businesses start to reopen, will offices whose employees are all vaccinated have different guidance than offices where some employees are not vaccinated? There is no information about that right now and we are not anticipating differing guidance.*
- Under the new guidelines, can a local service club or group meet indoors and outdoors at a restaurant? Will they still need to distance if they all show proof of vaccination? There is separate guidance for private events and restaurants, so groups meeting at restaurants must comply with both.*
- Is Contra Costa County contemplating creating its own vaccine passport? Would such a passport allow unfettered travel? Can services be denied for lack of a passport? Would passports be free? These are policies to be decided at the national/state level and involve huge issues in terms of equity and autonomy. There are circumstances where certain venues/events may open only to persons who have been vaccinated or who have recently tested with a negative result.*
- What is the status of vaccinating homebound seniors? The County is working through IHSS and other agencies to get mobile teams out to homes to vaccinate homebound people.*
- Do we anticipate changes in church guidelines? See the State Blueprint for updated guidelines. Recommendation of maximum 50% capacity. Not a requirement, just a recommendation.*
- For an outdoor/live event under 1,500 persons, will there be a requirement for masking and vaccination? No but there will be capacity restrictions: without vaccination would be 33%, with vaccination would be 67% capacity.*
- Will outdoor festivals of 15,000+ be allowed after June 15? Cannot predict, but*

Dr. Warne expects that masking would still be required.

- Cohort size and childcare centers? Formerly a maximum of 14 persons in Purple Tier. Under Orange, guidance is to keep cohorts as small and stable as possible but no set number is prescribed in the guidance.*
- Condo Association, 32 units, self-managed, includes laundry, great room, craft room, guest rooms. Can multiple households use the common facilities and under what restrictions? Can nonresidents use the facilities? Yes, within the available state guidance. Dr. Warne recommends they follow indoor gatherings guidance and post signage with capacity rules. Condo board can set stricter requirements but not less strict than state guidance.*
- When can we expect to see self-serve food/beverage dispensers in convenience stores? Currently not allowed but continue to watch state guidance or call the State COVID hotline.*

Chair Andersen invited public comment. Dr. Warne responded to questions asked in during the meeting:

- Mike McDermott: (1) CDC reduced social distancing to 3 ft for classrooms and schools. Contra Costa's 6 ft requirement is arbitrary; in other counties, it is set at 1 meter or 3 feet. (2) Will children, who have not been eligible for vaccination be excluded from events? Response: Dr. Warne said the social distancing guidance for schools was very important and there were extensive studies done to determine a safe distance. For the CDC to reduce the distancing for other activities, further study would be required. For certain events, those who are not vaccinated would need to show that they tested negatively. Children under two years of age do not need to be tested.*
- Kolette Simonton: When will County Health allow food trucks or grab and go food service? In 2020, it fell under Farmer's Market. (2) Will there be more specific guidelines for senior centers? Response: These activities are permitted under the updated guidance. CCC Environmental Health will need to determine how the guidance applies to food trucks. Senior Centers would operate under informal social gathering setting, which might limit capacity to 25 people or 25%.*
- Kids at Work: Preschool community cannot meet demands for childcare with restrictions on cohorts. Recommends increase to cohort numbers. Response: Cohorts were only limited to 14 under the Purple Tier. No specific limit is specified under the Orange Tier.*
- Rob Goldstein on behalf of Kiwanas of San Ramon Valley: Danville July 4 parade doesn't seem likely but how about Labor Day in September? Response: Cannot predict, but unlikely.*
- Devon Darner: Question about cohort sizes because Contra Costa's website site still limits cohort size to 14. Response: Cohorts were only limited to 14 under the Purple Tier. No specific limit is specified under the Orange Tier. Contra Costa website will be updated.*
- Cieli: Regarding festivals, how can we plan and anticipate what will be allowed? Response: We must track the State guidance and plan as best we can.*
- Tina Sherwin: What is the status of FDA approval of the COVID vaccines? Emergency use authorization, not FDA approved. Response: Moderna and Pfizer are submitting data to the FDA.*
- Tim Morgan: 1600 homes, outdoor pools, will it be possible that pool restrictions*

will be lifted as in Alameda County? Response: Dr. Warne referred to campgrounds and outdoor recreation applies to pools. Rules haven't changed substantially other than for groups that are fully vaccinated. Chair Andersen interjected that Alameda County now defers to the State guidelines.

- *Brenda Brown: Childcare cohorts, we need to see restrictions, if any, in writing. Tier ratios would be clearer and preferred. Response: Cohorts were only limited to 14 under the Purple Tier. No specific limit is specified under the Orange Tier.*
- *Kara Klotchman: Produces events for Downtown Martinez, confusion among farmer's market, maker's market, flea markets. What is allowed in terms of crafters? Also looking for guidelines on wine/beer strolls. Response: Unable to respond regarding crafters. Wine/beer strolls would be somewhat constrained in numbers under social gathering guidance.*
- *Jay Lipsen: Nonprofit fundraising events. Any idea about what future changes will take place at state level? Vaccination passports and all the attendant civil liberties issues? Response: The County has backed away from having separate regulations from the State. The County is now synchronized with the State. After June 15, County will likely defer to State guidance, whatever that will be. Bay Area counties provide input to the State.*

Vice Chair Mitchoff advised that County staff is working to update the County website regarding preschool cohort size.

Dr. Warne clarified that the County will follow the state guidance concerning cohort size.

4. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the March 18, 2021 meeting.

The Committee approved the record of action for the March 18, 2021 meeting as presented.

AYE: Chair Candace Andersen, Vice Chair Karen Mitchoff
Passed

5. The next meeting is currently scheduled for May 20, 2021.
6. Adjourn

Chair Andersen commented that she is optimistic about the County's COVID status and adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.