

MEMORANDUM

Office of the City Manager



DATE: December 18, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager *Steve McHarris*
FROM: Ashwini Kantak, Assistant City Manager *Ashwini Kantak*
SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus/COVID-19 Update #32

The health of our employees, residents, and businesses remains the highest priority for the City of Milpitas.

Overview:

The City of Milpitas continues to implement its response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease in Santa Clara County, in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Department of Public Health. The previous Council update on December 6 provided information on the Regional Stay at Home Order that went into effect in regions with less than 15% ICU availability. It prohibits private gatherings of any size, closes sector operations except for critical infrastructure and retail, and requires 100% masking and physical distancing in all others. Related to this, the Health Officers for the Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and Santa Clara as well as the City of Berkeley jointly announced the immediate implementation of the State's Regional Stay at Home Order ahead of the State's timeline. San Francisco Health Officer Dr. Tomás Aragon shared that "It takes several weeks for new restrictions to slow rising hospitalizations and waiting until only 15 percent of a region's ICU beds are available is just too late".

As the lead agency on public health, the County is regularly updating its guidance, which is available in five different languages and can be viewed [here](#). The County also has a [data dashboard](#) that is updated with all the latest information. The City continues to work closely with the County to ensure the safety and security of our community.

Key Updates:

Congress Anticipates Approving \$900 Billion Stimulus Deal

Talks are underway to approve second largest stimulus in United States history, following the CARES Act, which was the first Covid-19 relief bill passed. The current proposal includes a \$90 billion fund administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide to states and cities, which will not include a large pot of money for state and local governments and won't include [protections from lawsuits for businesses](#) and others that opened up during the pandemic. Lawmakers are currently making concessions that include delivering additional help to businesses, \$300-per-week jobless checks and direct-payment checks to Americans of about \$600.

State

CA Notify

On December 10, California residents started receiving push notifications on their smartphones prompting them to opt-in to CA Notify. This system is a COVID-19 exposure notification app that can anonymously alert users that they may have been exposed to the Covid-19 coronavirus. The app uses mobile phone Bluetooth functionality to determine if a person has come into contact with someone who recently tested positive for the virus. (In iOS, there is no app to download; the “Exposure Notification” feature can be turned on via the settings.) If an app user tests positive for COVID, the app will notify others with the app who have come into contact with them, without giving information about the individual who tested positive.

Two important privacy-protective choices are worth additionally highlighting: Google and Apple’s system do not track user’s location, and it uses a “decentralized” approach to keep all the user’s identifiers on their device.

According to the state Department of Public Health, the app secured 4 million signups by December 11. Public health officials hope the tool will help slow the spread of the virus by providing people with timely information so they can self-isolate and get tested for the disease. It is not a contact tracing app. Participants who test positive will receive a code from the State prompting further actions.

Vaccine Distribution Plan

This week, healthcare workers across California received the first doses of the Pfizer vaccine following the [FDA’s emergency approval of the vaccine](#). Approval for Moderna’s vaccine is also anticipated shortly and is expected to be just as effective. California expects to receive [327,600 doses of the Pfizer vaccine on or before Dec. 15](#), and [672,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine](#), if it’s approved, could arrive in the coming weeks, according to California Governor Gavin Newsom. Both vaccines need to be kept cold before they are distributed, but the Pfizer vaccine needs ultra-cold storage, between negative 70 and negative 80 degrees Celsius.

[California will prioritize employees with direct exposure to COVID-19](#) in the healthcare industry and long-term care facilities. Allocations are based upon how many people are in each county, each provider’s storage capacity and other health equity considerations.

County

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution to follow Federal, State Framework

Health officers for the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sonoma and the City of Berkeley support the [state’s vaccine distribution guidelines](#), which now prioritize healthcare workers in acute care facilities. Each jurisdiction will use the state roadmap to implement the distribution of vaccines in this first phase, which may take several months as supplies increase. Vaccines for the general public may be available by early summer.

Vaccinations in acute care hospital settings follow a federal and state framework adopted locally that will protect those living in skilled nursing facilities, settings where elderly, vulnerable members of our communities are more likely to have severe illness and die from COVID-19.

The first 5,850 doses of Pfizer vaccine have arrived in Santa Clara County. This batch is the first of the initial 17,550 allocated by the state. The remaining doses will be shipped from the manufacturer directly to the hospitals later this week. Another 39,300 doses from Moderna Inc. (pending FDA Emergency Use Authorization) is anticipated to arrive next week. The vaccines, each requiring two shots to be administered weeks apart (21 days for the Pfizer vaccine and 28 days for the Moderna vaccine), when taken as directed have an effectiveness rating of 90-95%.

As vaccine supplies grow to eventually include other groups, the Bay Area's Health Officers and federal officials believe these safe and effective vaccines will work in tandem with the daily habits and essential public health work that will ultimately end the pandemic. Those [key steps to fight the pandemic](#) include public health work to protect high-risk groups and health care workers, identifying and isolating cases, and also tracing and quarantining contacts. For the public that means wearing face coverings, avoiding gatherings, postponing travel, washing hands and staying home whenever possible.

Updated Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

The County of Santa Clara Public Health Department updated its guidance for quarantine of individuals exposed to someone with COVID-19 to be consistent with guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Quarantine is used to separate and restrict the movement of people who were exposed to COVID-19 to monitor for development of illness and to prevent spread of disease. The duration of isolation of individuals with COVID-19 remains unchanged at 10 days.

This updated quarantine guidance applies to everyone exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19.

For persons who are close contacts* of COVID-19 cases and who do not have symptoms:

- Discontinue quarantine after the end of Day 10 from last exposure (the day of last exposure is Day 0) but continue monitoring for symptoms for a full 14 days.
- Get tested on Day 6 or later from last exposure. If testing is done earlier than Day 6 and is negative, testing should be repeated on or after Day 6.
- If any symptoms of COVID-19 develop during Days 0–14, get tested immediately.

For persons who are close contacts* of COVID-19 cases and who do have symptoms:

- Get tested immediately upon symptom onset anytime during Day 0–14 from last exposure. If testing is done earlier than Day 6 and is negative, testing should be repeated on or after Day 6.
- Symptomatic close contacts who test negative may discontinue quarantine after the following criteria are met:
 - At least 10 days have passed since last exposure to case; AND
 - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; AND
 - Other symptoms have improved

**A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of the infected person for at least 15 minutes (continuous or repeated short duration interactions) at any time during the infectious period (2 days before the infected person had symptoms or tested positive until 10 days after).*

City of Milpitas

COVID-19 Business Webinar: Virtual Small Business Town Hall

On December 16, 2020, the City partnered with the Northern California Small Business Development Center (SBDC) on a virtual small business town hall seminar. The seminar focused on helping small businesses facing hardships due to COVID-19. Representatives from the US Small Business Administration (SBA), Northern California Small Business Financial Development Corporation (Nor-Cal FDC) and the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development shared information about a variety of resources and programs available to assist businesses in gaining access to working capital. For direct assistance and advice on accessing loans contact 833-ASK-SBDC or email Breana@norcal sbdc.org or Chris@norcal sbdc.org. SBDC helps businesses understand what resources are available to them while making tough decisions during the pandemic and get back to thriving.

Housing Resources Informational Workshop

On December 21, the City will be hosting a virtual workshop to help community members be aware of several housing programs and resources that they can look into as they navigate the impact of COVID-19 to their housing needs. Topics that will be covered include the following: Milpitas Rent Relief Program, It Takes a Village Assistance Program, Tenant Rights and AB 3088 as well as an overview of the City's Housing Resources. To register for the webinar, visit: <https://bit.ly/MilpitasHousingResources>.

Annual Milk and Cookies with Santa

This year due to the Covid-19 Pandemic residents were able to get their very own Milk & Cookies Event Kit and celebrate the Annual Milk & Cookies with Santa at home. Kits came with a cookie to decorate, icing, candy to decorate, build a project at home kit (donated by Home Depot), a coloring book for the holidays, a candy cane, a juice box, a blank Letter to Santa to fill out at home and an opportunity to see Santa socially distanced. The cost of each kit was \$10 and were available to the first 200 Milpitas Residents for purchase, including Milpitas Assistance Program (MAP) customers. A total of 170 kits were sold for the event.

Employee Vaccination

Although it is permissible for the City to require employees be vaccinated for COVID-19 in certain conditions where a job-related business necessity exists, the City recognizes that some employees may be hesitant to get the vaccine. Conversely, the City is also aware that most staff are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to get vaccinated. At this time, the City is not mandating vaccinations. Employees may be required to wear appropriate PPE as a condition of employment based on their duties. The City encourages all staff get the vaccine as soon as it becomes available per the County's roll-out plan. More information will be shared when determinations have been finalized. For more information, visit the Santa Clara County's website <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/covid19/Pages/home.aspx>.

Meals on Wheels

Since the Shelter-in-Place Order, the City has enrolled a total of 132 senior participants in the local Meals on Wheels (MOW) program through the County of Santa Clara. Seniors enrolled in the Meals on Wheels Program receive 14 meals a week plus a few grocery items delivered to their home. To serve even more seniors, staff continue to make personal phone calls to (pre Covid-19) regular participants and the broader Senior Center membership regarding the Meals on Wheels program seeking to arrange healthy meal delivery to vulnerable seniors who are sheltered-in-place.

Milpitas Response and Preparations

The City of Milpitas continues to operate at Stage 5 (Extremely High Response) of our Pandemic Management Plan. Operating at Stage 5 translates into the suspension of all non-essential City programs and services, the closure of City facilities, and full activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Our City's response will enable us to fulfill the four priorities of our Pandemic Response Plan:

1. **Protecting Our People:** Ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees.
2. **Continuity of Essential City Operations:** Sustaining delivery of critical City services.
3. **Effective Communication:** Ensuring timely and consistent communication internally with our employees and externally with our community.
4. **Support the Santa Clara County Public Health Department:** Provide resource and communication support to assist the County Public Health Officer, the County, and all our partners in mutual commitment to protect the people of our communities.

Current Status on City Services and Operations:

All City facilities are closed to the public until further notice. The Office of Emergency Services continues to operate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at a full activation level.

- **Police Department Public Lobby:** The Milpitas Police Department lobby is open during business hours, 8 AM to 5 PM. Supplemental safety measures are in place to ensure the safety of our staff and visitors. Community members can contact the non-emergency number (408-586-2400) for any further questions.
- **Public Meetings:** Starting with the October 6 City Council meeting, live, audio-only comments at public meetings was introduced. This was based on requests from the Council and community. The majority of Board, Commission, and Subcommittee meetings are transitioning to this new format to engage live public participation. The public may livestream the meeting on the City's [Website](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube channel](#) if not able to attend the live virtual meeting.
- **City Employees:** The City is continuing to have employees work in person or remotely on essential services and other City functions. With the evolving mandatory directives from the State and County, regular communications to employees are provided to ensure adherence to the latest order. City staff has also developed a self-check protocol that enables the safety of all employees. Protocols apply to all employees who are regularly coming to work to perform an essential service and may interact with the community or with other employees. With the new guideline from the County, additional questions about travel beyond 150 miles for non-essential work and inquiring

about self-quarantine have been added. Each City Department is responsible to coordinate the process for their respective employees. The self-check protocols are based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, State and County and will be updated accordingly.

- **Permit Center and Inspection Services:** Although the Permit Center located at City Hall is closed for in-person services, staff continues to provide permit and plan review services via email, website

information, telephone, and tele or web conferencing. All construction is currently allowed in Santa Clara County. However, construction activities must implement mandatory risk reduction measures, and comply with the [Mandatory Directive for Construction Projects](#). For detailed City service descriptions, refer to the latest [Permit Center and Inspection Services Information Flyer](#).

- **Recreation and Community Services:** All community programs and gatherings remain cancelled until further notice, including private rentals in City facilities and park picnic areas. The Senior Center remains closed for programming. The center offers “to-go” lunches, as a continuation of its Senior Nutrition Lunch Program.
- **Other City Services:** Water, sewer, stormwater, and traffic signal operation services continue to operate at normal levels. Staff also continues to provide maintenance services for facilities, fleet, parks, enhanced cleaning for some City facilities, emergency services for trees and streets, and Underground Service Alert services for construction projects that are allowed under the County order. Staff continues to work with Milpitas Sanitation to ensure adequate staffing is available for solid waste collection in the City. Public Works staff are also working to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations for all public works services. The City has established a virtual Utility Call Center from employees’ homes to ensure continuity of services. Meter reading staff will continue to respond to water service calls and maintain the City’s meter reading schedule.
- **Volunteers:** The City's Milpitas Volunteer Program (MVP) continues to recruit volunteers for various community support efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Community members looking to register as a volunteer and receive regular monthly updates on local volunteer needs can [visit our volunteer page](#).

Public Information:

The City will continue to update its [COVID-19 webpage](#) that has been established specifically for information about coronavirus. We will also be providing regular public updates through our social media accounts on Facebook, Nextdoor, and Twitter.