



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of February 2, 2021

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco

<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

San Francisco to reopen some activities in response to State lifting regional stay at home order

Today, there are over 31,000 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 324 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

On January 25, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced that San Francisco will resume some businesses and activities, beginning the morning of Thursday, January 28, after the state announced it would lift mandatory regional restrictions.

San Francisco will continue the requirement first put in place by the State that limits non-essential businesses from operating or anyone from gathering with members outside of their household between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. People can continue to leave their homes during that time for any other reason. This requirement will remain in effect until San Francisco is assigned to the State's red tier.

The Bay Area Regional Stay at Home Order was put into place by the State of California on December 17 due to surging cases and hospitalizations that threatened ICU capacity. At this point, the region's ICU capacity has stabilized, and cases and hospitalizations are trending down, prompting the State to lift the order. San Francisco's actual ICU capacity holds steady at more than 25% and its hospitalization and case rates are declining. Though San Francisco's case rate is still nearly twice the rate that would be required to advance to the red tier, San Francisco will proceed in lifting its local Stay at Home Order to resume activities allowed by the State in the purple tier, with certain additional safety limitations.

San Francisco experienced a significant surge in COVID-19 cases in the fall that escalated further in December. The average number of COVID cases increased more than tenfold from 32 in mid-October to 372 at the surge's peak. Currently, San Francisco is currently averaging 261 new COVID-19 cases per day; however, the case rate is declining. Because of the prevalence of the virus, and particularly considering the emergence of new, extremely contagious variants, it remains critical that San Franciscans continue with the preventive measures that limit the spread of the virus, like wearing a face covering whenever you are outside your home, including during exercise; washing hands regularly; and maintaining physical distance. To continue on the path of re-opening, San Francisco's case rate and the hospitalization rate will need to keep declining.



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The City is taking measured steps in order to balance the public health harms of COVID-19 transmission and public health harms of economic stress. The activities allowed under the purple tier are primarily outdoors or, when indoors, are restricted to low-volume activities that minimize the number of people interacting. San Francisco updated its health order to come into close alignment with the State, although there remain a few areas of departure where it is important to minimize the risk to public health in a dense urban environment.

Activities that resumed as of Thursday, January 28

- Personal Services. Indoor and outdoor personal services establishments, including hair and nail salons, barbers, tattoo, piercing, and massage services may reopen, but facial coverings are required to be worn at all times. Services that would necessitate the removal of facial coverings are not allowed at this point.
- Outdoor Dining. Outdoor dining may resume. It is limited to up to 6 people total from up to two households at a table. Per State requirements, barriers between tables can no longer serve as an alternative to distancing tables 6 feet or more. Live entertainment is allowed except for singing or brass or wind instruments.
- Outdoor Museums and Zoos. Outdoor operations for museums and zoos may resume, though zoos are capped at 50% capacity not including personnel. Concessions are allowed under the guidance of retail or outdoor dining according to the type of concessions.
- Outdoor Family Entertainment Centers. Family entertainment such as skate parks, batting cages, miniature golf, kart racing, and laser tag or paintball may resume outdoor operations. Roller and ice skating rinks may operate at 25% capacity. Concessions are allowed under the guidance of retail or outdoor dining according to the type of concessions.
- Open Air Boats and Busses. Open air boats and busses may operate outdoor operations of up to 12 passengers or physically distanced groups of 12, if social distancing can be maintained between groups. Concessions are allowed under the guidance of retail or outdoor dining according to the type of concessions.
- Small Gatherings. Members of up to 3 households with a maximum of 12 people total may gather outdoors if social distance can be maintained and no food or drink is being consumed. If food or drink is being consumed, only members from two households of up to 6 people total is allowed.
- Indoor Fitness. 1:1 personal training is allowed to resume indoors with no more than 3 people, including the customer, the trainer and a support staff.
- Indoor Funerals. Indoor funerals may take place with up to 12 people.

The following activities may expand their operating capacity:

- Grocery Stores. Standalone grocery stores may operate at 50% customer capacity, not including personnel, up from 35%.
- Retail. All retail including low-contact retail services such as dog groomers, shoe, electronics and similar repair services may operate at 25% customer capacity, not including personnel,



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up from 20%. For enclosed shopping malls, any common areas and food courts must remain closed.

- **Hotels and Lodging.** Hotels and lodging may accept reservations for tourist use from in-state and out of state guests. Out of Bay Area guests are required to quarantine for 10 days and must make a reservation for 10 days or longer in order to do so. Indoor gyms, meeting rooms, ballrooms and dining must remain closed, though outdoor dining can resume and room service can continue.
- **Outdoor Fitness.** Removes the 12-person cap on outdoor fitness so long as social distancing can be met and increases the fitness class cap to 25.
- **Youth sports.** Youth sports without spectators are allowed if it is part of a childcare or out of school time (OST) program or part of an organized and supervised youth sports program. Additionally, low-contact youth sports that are allowed by the state in the purple tier may resume such as dancing, biking, no-contact martial arts, lawn bowling, or bocce ball. Distancing and face coverings must be in place at all times.
- **Outdoor Recreation.** Up to three households may engage in recreational activities that allow social distancing, including low-contact sports such as hiking, biking, dancing, and including those that share equipment such as balls and Frisbees.
- **Golf and Tennis.** Expands to allow foursomes for golf, but limits to one household per cart and requires staggered tee times. Expands to allow doubles for tennis limited to members of one household per team. Pickleball remains limited to singles per State requirements.
- **Outdoor Religious and Political Gatherings.** Removes the 200-person cap to allow religious and political activities to take place unrestricted as long as social distancing can be maintained.

Public health officials will regularly assess the [Key Public Health Indicators](#), particularly new positive case counts and hospitalizations to ensure San Francisco has the necessary resources available for those who contract COVID-19. The phasing of additional activities is structured to maximize the City's ability to track these local health indicators and ensure that San Francisco continues to manage its risk and to protect public health. While San Francisco recognizes and is attempting to align with the State's thresholds, the City will continue on a reopening path based on its local health indicators and the unique challenges and successes of its local reopening. San Francisco's reopening updates are available online at [SF.gov/reopening](https://sf.gov/reopening).

San Francisco launches first high-volume COVID-19 vaccination site

On January 22, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced the launch of the first high-volume vaccination site in San Francisco, which is part of the City's plan to get as many people vaccinated as soon as possible. The new vaccination site is located at City College of San Francisco's main campus on Ocean Avenue in the Oceanview, Merced Heights, Ingleside (OMI) neighborhood. This location, which is operated by the City and staffed in



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partnership with UCSF Health, is the first of three high-volume vaccination sites announced by Mayor Breed last week.

Two additional high-volume vaccination sites will be located at the Moscone Center in SoMa and the SF Market in the Bayview. These high-volume sites will serve anyone eligible to receive the vaccine regardless of health coverage (by appointment only) and are part of San Francisco's planned network of vaccination sites to facilitate the quick and efficient delivery of COVID-19 vaccines.

The high-volume vaccination sites, like the new site at City College, will be complemented by targeted efforts to ensure communities most highly impacted by COVID-19 receive equitable access to the vaccine. These targeted efforts include mobile vaccination teams, community vaccination sites, DPH's community clinics, and other safety net clinics in neighborhoods such as Chinatown, the Mission, Western Addition, and the Bayview.

Due to the limited vaccine supply at this time, appointments at the City College site will initially be available by invitation only and will follow the prioritization criteria required by the State. Once vaccine supply increases, the site will scale up, and anyone who lives or works in San Francisco and who is eligible for vaccination will be able to access the vaccine at this site regardless of their health coverage status or provider. While vaccine supply remains the limiting factor in the short-term, the site will have the capacity to vaccinate more than 3,000 people per day once fully operational.

San Francisco launches first neighborhood COVID-19 vaccine site in the Mission District as part of Citywide network of vaccination sites

On February 1, Mayor London N. Breed, the Department of Public Health, Unidos en Salud/United in Health, UCSF, and the Latino Task Force announced the opening of a new neighborhood COVID-19 vaccine site at 24th Street and Capp Street in the Mission District. The 24th Street site, which will be followed shortly by a neighborhood vaccine access site in the Bayview, is the first of a number of neighborhood sites that the City will be opening to ensure that highly impacted neighborhoods have equitable access to the vaccine.

The site opening on Monday was a soft launch while operations are refined to ensure safety for patients and staff and while necessary infrastructure is put in place to allow the site to scale up as more vaccine supply becomes available. Given that supply of the vaccine remains extremely limited, vaccinations at the 24th Street site will be by appointment only. Initial appointments during the soft launch phase will go to community health workers and local residents over the age of 65 within the Unidos en Salud network, which includes uninsured vulnerable populations.

The site will have an initial capacity of 120 vaccinations per day and, when vaccine capacity increases, this site may expand to conduct 200-400 vaccinations per day. The 24th Street site has the



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additional benefit of being adjacent to a significant transit hub, ensuring that it is accessible and convenient for the community health workers and other eligible people that it will serve. It also will be co-located with the Unidos en Salud testing site at the nearby 24th Street and Mission Street BART plaza, operating four days a week.

In addition to the 24th Street site, the City continues to locate vaccine resources in neighborhoods that have disproportionately carried the burden of COVID-19. In addition to neighborhood vaccine sites, DPH and its community partners continue to vaccinate people through community clinics in the Western Addition, Chinatown, Bayview, Outer Sunset, and Potrero. The City is working to expand neighborhood vaccine sites to the Bayview, Excelsior, Visitacion Valley and other neighborhoods with the highest infection rates for COVID-19 and limited access to health care services. Additionally, the City is partnering with Safeway pharmacies to bring vaccines to various neighborhoods.

Anyone who works or lives in San Francisco can sign up for a notification when they are eligible for vaccination at [SF.gov/vaccinenotify](https://sf.gov/vaccinenotify). The City will continue to provide regular updates to the public about the vaccine in San Francisco at: [SF.gov/covidvaccine](https://sf.gov/covidvaccine).

Mayor Breed announces new Director of Behavioral Health Services and Mental Health SF

On January 27, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced the hiring of a new Director of Behavioral Health Services and Mental Health SF, Dr. Hillary Kunins, to lead the transformation of mental health and substance use care for San Francisco.

Dr. Kunins, an internist and addiction medicine physician, currently serves as Executive Deputy Commissioner of Mental Hygiene at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She leads strategic and equity-driven initiatives to improve the behavioral health of all New Yorkers—including children, youth and families, and people who are justice-involved, who are experiencing homelessness, who live with developmental challenges, and who use drugs. Dr. Kunins helped quickly implement and scale up Mayor Bill de Blasio's \$60 million HealingNYC initiative, reimagining New York City's public health approaches to substance use and overdose. Her experience in naloxone distribution, peer support, and expanding access to buprenorphine treatment will inform ongoing overdose prevention efforts in DPH.

One of Dr. Kunins' primary responsibilities when she joins DPH in March 2021 will be to direct the implementation of Mental Health SF legislation unanimously supported by Mayor Breed and the Board of Supervisors in December 2019. Informed by the Mental Health Reform team directed by Mayor Breed's appointee Dr. Anton Nigusse Bland, Mental Health SF is already under way with programs such as the Street Crisis Response Team. Mental Health SF includes new mental health and substance use treatment beds, a Mental Health Service Center, an Office of Coordinated Care, and other programs designed to serve the 4,000 San Franciscans Dr. Nigusse Bland identified as



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simultaneously experiencing homelessness, serious mental illness, and substance use disorder. Mental Health SF is a key initiative of DPH Behavioral Health Services (BHS), which delivers mental health and substance use care, from early intervention programs in schools to outpatient counseling, residential treatment, and crisis services to some 30,000 San Franciscans each year.

Dr. Kunins holds MD and MPH degrees from Columbia University and an MS in Clinical Research from Einstein College of Medicine. When Dr. Kunins assumes her new role in San Francisco, acting Director of Behavioral Health Services, Marlo Simmons, who has overseen the integration of Mental Health SF into the ongoing quality improvement of BHS since February 2020, will return to her duties as Deputy Director.

Mayor Breed announces expanded mental health support for SF students

On January 29, Mayor London N. Breed announced San Francisco is providing new mental health resources for San Francisco Unified School District students and their families who need behavioral health crisis support. The City is expanding the Mobile Response Team (MRT), which provides personalized mental health and wellness services for children and youth who are referred to the program, including in-person interventions during the pandemic. SFUSD students are now eligible for services from the Mobile Response Team, and additional staff and behavioral health clinicians will enable the program to serve approximately 80 additional students and families.

The expansion of the Mobile Response Team bolsters the School District's ongoing efforts to help students cope with complex issues such as stress, trauma, suicide, bullying, depression, self-esteem, drug and alcohol use, sexual health, and relationships. The Mobile Response Team, operated by Seneca Family of Agencies, provides a non-police, age-appropriate response for children and youth experiencing behavioral health crises or in need of preventative care. When a child or youth is referred to the program, the MRT staff respond with a range of services, including crisis prevention, counseling, developing short- and medium-term care plans, helping the family find long-term services, and coordinating the young person's mental health care.

Due to COVID-19, many SFUSD students have been unable to access in-person counseling and behavioral health services that are normally available at school. Since schools shifted to distance learning in March 2020, the School District has transitioned many services to virtual formats, including social worker office hours and online meetings. The expansion of the Mobile Response Team will help the District reach students and families who would benefit from in-person mental health support.

MRT's services are available based on a referral system and in coordination with existing behavioral health programs, such as the City's Comprehensive Crisis Services (CCS) program, DPH's Family Mosaic Program or clinics, Edgewood's youth Crisis Stabilization Unit, or a primary care setting. With the expansion of the program, SFUSD social workers are now able to request assistance from



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MRT's staff and trained behavioral health clinicians. This ongoing partnership with Seneca will allow DPH to continue referring clients and receiving referrals from the MRT for longer-term care and support, trauma-informed early and sustained interventions that are key to stabilizing children and youth in crisis.

Laguna Honda update

Laguna Honda Hospital faced the biggest challenge of the pandemic to date with an increase in cases reflective of the State-wide surge. We have known since the beginning of the pandemic that Laguna Honda, like SNFs across the country, would be particularly vulnerable to the virus. Laguna Honda is the largest publicly run SNF in the country and serves San Francisco's most vulnerable residents.

Unfortunately, this latest surge in cases did result in the deaths of six COVID-19 positive residents between December 11, 2020 and January 7, 2021. We share our sympathies with the residents' families, friends, and Laguna Honda Resident Care Team, and we thank these residents for being a part of the Laguna Honda community.

Laguna Honda responded to the surge in cases with increased testing, increased PPE, robust vaccination rollout, and a neighborhood shelter-in-place to restrict the movement of residents and staff on campus. Laguna Honda's COVID-19 case count can be found on the public-facing dashboards at lagunahonda.org/COVID19. These dashboards are updated every weekday.

While the pandemic is far from over, we are seeing promising signs at Laguna Honda, including a decrease in new cases and many resident recoveries. Cases are down over 30 percent from December to January and our last resident case was on January 18, 2021. We currently have nine active resident COVID-19 cases, down from our high of 23 on January 13, 2021. In response to the decrease in cases, Laguna Honda lifted the neighborhood shelter-in-place on February 1, 2021.

At Laguna Honda we know how critical it is to get our residents and staff vaccinated quickly and safely. While the vaccine is not panacea, it is a vital next step toward ending the pandemic. Vaccine rollout also reflects a moment of great hope for our entire community of residents, resident families, and staff who continue to make great sacrifices to slow the spread of COVID-19. Approximately 88 percent of residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine with the vast majority fully vaccinated.

Health promotion program produces video briefing housing insecurity impacts on children and pregnant women

The Children's Environmental Health Promotion Program (CEHP) in the Environmental Health Branch and Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MCAH) of the San Francisco Health Network



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produced a housing insecurity video to increase awareness, with the goal of reducing/eliminating housing insecurity in San Francisco. This video tackles the complex housing insecurity issues affecting pregnancy and families with children 0-5 years in San Francisco and hopes to inform policy groups on housing insecurity decisions. The video will also be used as a part of housing insecurity introduction trainings or presentations. The video can be viewed [here](#)

In 2008, CEHP partnered with the Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to offer comprehensive healthy home inspections. Seeing housing insecurity as a significant health issue during these inspections, CEHP expanded their comprehensive home inspections partnership with other groups servicing pregnant women and children 0-5 years, including MCAH, SF childcare centers, and UCSF's Health Advocates. As a result, in 2017, CEHP produced a report, "[Promoting Housing Security and Healthy Homes for Families Served by Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Programs.](#)" Following the expansion of services, CEHP and MCAH produced the following additional reports in 2019: [San Francisco Department of Public Health Brief: Health Impacts of Family Housing Insecurity](#) and [San Francisco Department of Public Health Case Study: Staff Vicarious Trauma from Family Housing Insecurity](#). These reports complement the recently produced video.

To bring together other agencies in the City with the same concern, CEHP led the formation of a housing insecurity group with UCSF's Preterm Birth Initiative and MCAH. One of the main focuses of this group is to remedy the lack of assessment of the housing security status of children 0-5 years and pregnant women.

SF Health department launches COVID safety training module to city employees

In response to Cal/OSHA's Emergency Temporary Standard for COVID-19 prevention in non-healthcare settings (which are already addressed in existing regulations) the San Francisco Department of Public Health Occupational Safety and Health Division partnered with the City's Department of Human Resources to develop a COVID-19 eLearning module intended to address the training requirements of the new Standard. In less than one month, the text-heavy regulation module was translated into an illustrated, voice-narrated training. The training module was assigned to 33,000 plus City and County of San Francisco employees last week, using the Controller's Office eLearning system embedded in the City's "Employee Gateway". This training addresses controls and safeguards with the degree of specificity that Cal OSHA expects, as well as a supervisor's safety briefing component.

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