



State of California

BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES AND HOUSING AGENCY

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

TO: Homeless Assistance Providers
FROM: California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
DATE: March 18, 2020
SUBJECT: Interim Guidance for Homeless Assistance Providers on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and is in follow up to the [guidance](#) released on March 10, 2020. The Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) will update this interim guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available. Please check <https://www.bcsch.ca.gov/hcfc/> regularly to ensure that you are accessing the most up-to-date information available.

Shelter Environments: preventing disease spread among clients and staff

As recommended in the [Center for Disease Control's Interim Guidance for homeless services providers](#):

- In general sleeping areas (for those who are not experiencing respiratory symptoms), ensure that beds/mats are at least 3 feet apart, and request that all clients sleep head-to-toe.
- Provide access to fluids, tissues, plastic bags for the proper disposal of used tissues.
- Ensure bathrooms and other sinks are consistently stocked with soap and drying materials for handwashing. Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol (if that is an option at your shelter) at key points within the facility, including registration desks, entrances/exits, and eating areas.
- At check-in, provide any client with respiratory symptoms (cough, fever) with a surgical mask. (The Atlanta Continuum of Care developed a triage-screening tool focused on reorganizing the intake

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- workflow to effectively identify symptomatic and asymptomatic people entering congregate sites. A link to their tool can be found on the [HUD Exchange](#)).
- Per HUD guidance, shelter providers should consult with their local health department before turning away individuals with respiratory symptoms. Shelter providers should be establishing protocols for addressing such situations with the health departments as soon as possible. If an individual requires medical attention, providers should continue to direct them to a healthcare provider.
 - Confine clients with mild respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection to individual rooms, if possible, and have them avoid common areas.
 - Follow CDC recommendations for how to prevent further spread in your facility.
 - If individual rooms for sick clients are not available, consider using a large, well-ventilated room for people with mild respiratory symptoms.
 - In areas where clients with respiratory illness are staying, keep beds at least 3 feet apart and use temporary barriers between beds, such as curtains, and request that all clients sleep head-to-toe.
 - If possible, designate a separate bathroom for sick clients with COVID-19 symptoms.
 - Consider reducing cleaning frequency in bedrooms and bathrooms dedicated to ill persons to as-needed cleaning (e.g., of soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact with the ill persons.
 - Decisions about whether clients with mild illness due to suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should remain in the shelter or be directed to alternative housing sites should be made in coordination with local health authorities.
 - If you identify any client with severe symptoms, notify your public health department and arrange for the client to receive immediate medical care.
 - Ensure that all common areas within the facility follow good practices for environmental cleaning. Cleaning should be conducted in accordance with [CDC recommendations](#).

Please note that guidance around accessing additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves, has changed. The Medical Health Operations Area Coordinator (MHOAC) has begun prioritizing supplies for health

care workers and first responders. Contact your local Offices of Emergency Management for any supply needs (see below for contact information).

Sheltering for Individuals who are at risk of infection, including in hotel/motels

Collaboration is critical among the homelessness services system, local government and emergency services, public health system, and health care facilities to ensure that people experiencing homelessness have access to safe and adequate shelter or housing and medical care if they become ill with COVID-19. The state is working to identify hotel/motel rooms and other spaces around California to support homeless individuals or families who, in priority order:

- 1) Test positive for COVID-19 who do not require hospitalization but need isolation (including those exiting from hospitals);
- 2) Have been exposed, or potentially exposed to COVID-19 who do not require hospitalization;
- 3) Persons needing social distancing as a precautionary measure, particularly for high-risk groups such as people over 65 or with certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease); and
- 4) Other homeless populations that are not among the foregoing categories but whose living situation makes them unable to adhere to social distancing guidance.

To the extent outreach is occurring, the State strongly encourages prioritizing individuals 65 and older.

Homeless individuals who test positive and require hospitalization will need to be accommodated through the existing health care network – these hotel/motel rooms are not intended to serve as health care facilities and protocols for referrals and access to health care facilities should be developed ASAP.

Please coordinate with your County Office of Emergency Management (see below for contact information) to determine your community's need for hotel/motel rooms to accommodate homeless individuals and families and request support from the state. The local Emergency Operations Center, public health authority and social services department, in coordination with their local homeless services providers and Continuum of Care, will:

- Determine the clients that are to be served by the hotels/motels.
- Transport clients.
- Provide contracts and funding for basic wrap-around services such as sanitation, janitorial, feeding, and security as a requirement to receive

- the asset. In some cases the hotel's workforce can provide these services if the proper PPE and protocols are available.
- Plan for social and medical service enhancements, as needed, funded by local governments.

These emergency shelter costs are partially federally reimbursable under the declared state of emergency.

Important note: The local governments should continue any independent efforts to secure congregate shelter opportunities within their own jurisdictions. If local governments identify opportunities for any leases, congregate capacity or isolation capacity, they are advised to move forward with those leases independently and apart from the State's efforts.

For any questions related to this effort, please contact the California Department of Social Services directly by emailing JR Antablian at George.Antablian@dss.ca.gov.

Homelessness Funding

Today, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order to, effective immediately, broaden the purposes of what local recipients can spend existing state homelessness funding funds to include shelter capacity expansion, emergency protective measures and supplies to limit infection among vulnerable homeless individuals, and other prevention and containment efforts related to COVID-19 and its impact on California's homeless population. Local providers are encouraged to contact their cities, counties, and Continuums of Care for details on accessing these resources.

The Governor also directed another \$100 million allocated to local recipients through the funding formula from the Homeless Housing, Assistance & Prevention program, including direct allocations to cities, counties, and Continuums of Care.

Homelessness Prevention Efforts

On March 16, 2017, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an [executive order](#) that suspends any provision of state law that restricts a local government's ability to limit residential or commercial evictions, slows foreclosures, and protects against utility shutoffs. The state encourages you to share this information broadly to protect any potentially unstably housed individuals or families who have been impacted by COVID-19.

General questions? Contact the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council at HCFC@bcsh.ca.gov.

County Emergency Management Office Contacts

County	Emergency Management Contact
Alameda County	510-268-2134
Alpine County	530-694-2231
Amador County	209-223-6384
Butte County	530-552-3333
Calaveras County	209-754-2890
Colusa County	530-458-0230
Contra Costa County	925-646-4690/925-957-5403
Del Norte County	707-465-0430 X-1135/707-464-3191
El Dorado County	530-621-5895
Fresno County	559-445-3391
Glenn County	530-934-6588
Humboldt County	707-268-2181
Imperial County	442-265-6012
Inyo County	760-878-0120
Kern County	661-873-2604
Kings County	559-852-2883
Lake County	707-263-1090
Lassen County	530-257-8504
Los Angeles County	323-628-7019
Madera County	559-642-3201
Marin County	415-473-6833
Mariposa County	209-742-1306
Mendocino County	707-565-6505
Merced County	209-385-7342
Modoc County	530-233-4416
Mono County	760-924-1829
Monterey County	831-755-5013
Napa County	707-253-4270
Nevada County	530-265-1515
Orange County	714-628-7059
Placer County	530-889-7153
Plumas County	530-283-6332
Riverside County	951-955-1392
Sacramento County	916-874-4670
San Benito County	831-636-4168
San Bernardino County	909-356-3998
San Diego County	858-714-2201
San Francisco County	415-487-5000

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County	Emergency Management Contact
San Joaquin County	209-953-6200
San Luis Obispo County	805-781-5011
San Mateo County	650-573-2579
Santa Barbara County	805-681-5526
Santa Clara County	408-792-3798\408-794-0610
Santa Cruz County	831-454-4751
Shasta County	530-245-6025
Sierra County	530-289-2850
Siskiyou County	530-841-2155
Solano County	707-553-5483
Sonoma County	707-565-6505
Stanislaus County	209-552-3600
Sutter County	530-822-4575
Tehama County	530-529-7900
Trinity County	530-623-1116
Tulare County	559-624-7498
Tuolumne County	209-533-5534
Ventura County	805-654-2380
Yolo County	530-406-4933
Yuba County	530-749-7521