



Partners and Stakeholders,

We know that the spread of the COVID-19 could be particularly dangerous for those experiencing homelessness. Individuals without stable housing not only face greater difficulty taking preventative actions, but they are generally already in poorer health than other Santa Clara County residents.

As part of the countywide public health response to the coronavirus, the County of Santa Clara and the City of San José are working with the Centers for Disease Control, Public Health, Destination: Home and our partners on a coordinated effort to slow transmission of COVID-19, to mitigate the impact that novel coronavirus could have on homeless individuals and families, and to identify resources for those people that need isolation but have no home.

Over the last few days we have disseminated guidance, in multiple languages when possible, to sheltered and unsheltered persons and to agencies operating temporary shelters, outreach programs, day centers, supportive housing program sites, and affordable housing developments. We will continue to refine that guidance based on new information.

To communicate and clarify current and new guidance, answer or collect questions, and identify resource needs, we will be hosting periodic calls for agencies serving homeless and formerly homeless persons. These calls will be coordinated with or joined by staff from emergency operations centers. The calls will be the means by which we communicate, coordinate, and develop new actions. Last week we hosted several calls with different groups from our provider community. Starting tomorrow, March 17<sup>th</sup>, we will host a regular all-provider morning call.

While the situation remains fluid, we have implemented or are developing the following plans:

1. Increase or improve basic need services to sheltered and unsheltered persons.
  - a. The City of San Jose has delivered handwashing stations, portable toilets, clean water and arranged for refuse pickup at 14 locations with relatively large groups of unsheltered persons. We are developing options and plans for other cities in Santa Clara County.
  - b. Developing plans to keep restrooms at parks and other public facilities open.
  - c. We've updated protocols for and have supplied outreach and mobile healthcare teams to help ensure unsheltered individuals are properly connected to available resources, information, and medical assistance, when necessary. We're in the process of organizing volunteers to assist with this effort.

- d. We're working to increase mobile shower services.
    - e. We're coordinating scarce mobile medical services to support individuals who are elderly and/or have underlying health conditions.
  2. Improve access to basic need services through day-time service centers and/or locations where homeless persons may go to for assistance (e.g., Emergency Assistance Network agencies, Compassion Center in Gilroy, ConXion in San Jose).
    - a. Providing additional supplies like hygiene kits
    - b. Adding washers and dryers
    - c. Assisting with the ordering of hard to get hygiene and medical supplies.
  3. Modifying protocols and increasing support to temporary shelter sites to better serve sheltered persons.
    - a. Requesting / authorizing that all temporary shelter sites operate 24/7.
    - b. Increasing supplies or addressing supply needs at temporary shelter sites.
    - c. Installing or providing washers and dryers at all sites.
    - d. Assisting with the ordering of hard to get hygiene and medical supplies.
  4. Expanding temporary shelter capacity in order to increase 'social distancing' and establishing protocols to better separate at-risk individuals staying at existing shelters.
  5. Identifying public or private sites across the county that could be safely used to house homeless individuals who are either already ill, awaiting test results, or face serious health risks if they were to become ill.
  6. Updating protocols for service providers and case managers who are providing critical direct services, including safety protocols and video conferencing options, including communication and triage for non-profit workers who become ill and agencies who are over capacity.

Our team will be working closely with the many local non-profits and service providers currently working with homeless individuals to refine and implement this coordinated effort to protect homeless individuals from the coronavirus.

We will share additional updates as specific plans are finalized and implemented in the days ahead. If you have a potential location that could be used for social distancing, isolation or quarantining please contact Michelle Covert at [Michelle.Covert@hhs.sccgov.org](mailto:Michelle.Covert@hhs.sccgov.org).

Please follow @HealthySCC on twitter for regular public health updates or monitor the public health website at <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/phd/Pages/phd.aspx>.