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# San Bernardino County being watched by state as coronavirus cases, hospitalizations rise



By **SANDRA EMERSON** | [semerson@scng.com](mailto:semerson@scng.com) |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 1:07 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 1:07 p.m.



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San Bernardino County is under observation by the state public health department for a spike in new novel coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, a development that comes as the county reported 176

new cases and four more deaths Wednesday, June 10.

Through Wednesday, 225 people in the county have died from COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, and 6,593 have tested positive, according to the county's online dashboard. Deaths were up 1.8% from Saturday, June 6, while cases rose 2.7% from Tuesday, June 9.

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The county is among nine on the list — which also includes Los Angeles and Imperial counties — being monitored by state public health officials.

In San Bernardino County, new cases and increasing hospitalizations are attributed to gatherings after May holidays, including Mother's Day and Memorial Day, outbreaks at state prisons, county jails and some skilled-nursing facilities, according to the state public health department.



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UCIA Health Services Director Merrill H. ... READ MORE

County officials were not immediately available for comment Wednesday morning.

Outbreaks have been reported at the California Institution for Men and the California Institution for Women in Chino and the West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga. Several nursing homes have also reported outbreaks, with the largest seen at facilities in Yucaipa, Colton, San Bernardino and Redlands.

As of Monday, June 8, there were 33% more COVID-19 positive patients in hospitals and 19% more in intensive care units than the week prior. Hospitalizations reached a new high of 197 Monday, up from 164 the day before.

Hospitalizations grew every day for a week, leading to the previous high of 195 patients on Saturday, June 6.

The county took in about 20 patients from Imperial County.

However, according to the county's dashboard, hospital beds and ventilators remain available.

A county task force has been working with skilled-nursing facilities to reduce the spread of the virus and is in communication with state and prison medical officials, according to the state.

Meanwhile, county public health officials believe 3,931 residents have recovered from the disease.

Testing was up 1.9%. In the county of 2.1 million residents, 79,337 have been tested, of which 8.3% were positive.

The time it takes for the disease to double in the community was 17.4 days.

See a list of community-by-community cases here.

*Staff Writer Nikie Johnson contributed to this report.*

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# San Bernardino County OKs new budget, braces for coronavirus sales-tax hit



By **SANDRA EMERSON** | [semerson@scng.com](mailto:semerson@scng.com) |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 3:28 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 3:31 p.m.



San Bernardino County is heading into the new fiscal year with a temporary budget, while officials monitor the economic toll caused by weeks of novel coronavirus-related closures.

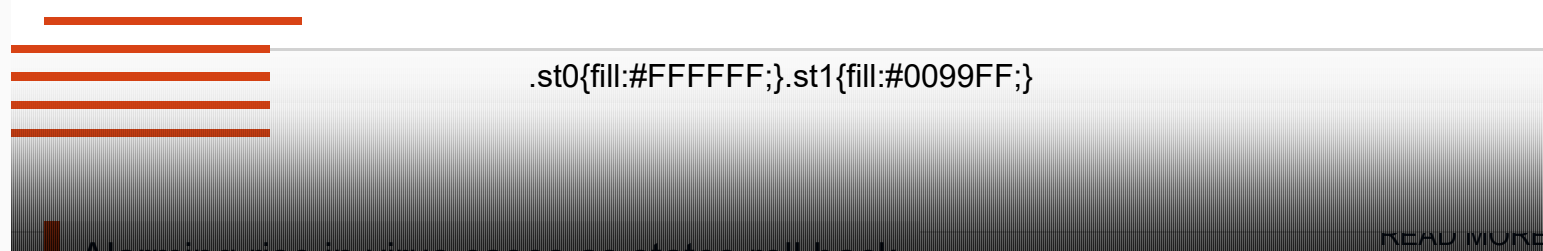
The county expects to lose sales-tax revenues, but it's too early to know how much, officials say. On Tuesday, June 9, supervisors adopted a budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, with plans to make changes later.

“We’re basically just rolling over a make-believe budget that doesn’t incorporate all the different changes that we’re anticipating coming at this point and we’re going to return with additional budget

changes in the future,” Gary McBride, the county’s chief executive officer, told supervisors Tuesday.

The pandemic has caused widespread economic devastation as businesses were closed and employees laid off as health orders aimed to slow the spread of the disease. However, this recession is different from past downturns because it mostly hit sales-tax revenues and over a short time, McBride said.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5



Sales taxes in San Bernardino County were down 24% in March, when the stay-at-home orders started, and April is expected to be worse, McBride said. The county does not yet have numbers for April or May.

The county’s budget is primarily driven by property taxes, which are more stable than sales-tax revenues, McBride said. While county officials are expecting future effects on property taxes, it’s unclear when.

The money the county receives to run law and justice, human services and health programs comes from the state, which is facing budget woes of its own.

“The majority of the budget we have are programs that we operate on behalf of the state and federal government,” he said.

The state’s Legislative Analyst’s Office forecasts either an annual 8% sales tax loss or an 18% sales tax loss statewide, which would mean a deficit in San Bernardino County of \$69 million or \$148 million, respectively, in five years if no cuts are made.



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If sales tax is down 13%, the county could lose \$124.5 million in the new fiscal year, which would affect the sheriff’s, probation, district attorney and public defender offices, social services programs, behavioral and public health and public works. In five years, the county would have a \$104 million deficit.

“Just like every other business and family out there is making adjustments to their budget, we will have to be flexible depending on how that goes and how long it goes through,” Board Chairman Curt Hagman said.

Meanwhile, the county is reviewing which open positions should be filled and leaving some jobs open when possible, McBride said. County administrators are also asking departments to review budgets for cost savings as well as to evaluate new and existing capital improvement projects.

Supervisors also tentatively approved changes in compensation for elected officials and other county employees not represented by a union, including giving McBride the ability to postpone raises planned in July.

A second wave of the pandemic, continued unemployment, foreclosures and uncertain state funding remain concerns, McBride said.

County officials also are hoping for new emergency funding from the federal government and a deadline extension to use Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or CARES, Act money.

The county could rely on reserves to get through next fiscal year, but McBride said he would not recommend that.

Supervisor Josie Gonzales said the board has been criticized for being stringent in keeping reserves, rather than spending the money. Those reserves are now helping the county keep its head above water after the crisis, she said.

“We have been able to demonstrate we were responsible and we’re not drowning,” Gonzales said. “I’m hoping that we’re able to work our way through this, but know this board did the right thing over and over and over again for the last 16 years that I’ve been here.”

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# Equity group to address racial disparities in San Bernardino County

By Martin Estacio  
Staff Writer

Posted Jun 10, 2020 at 7:50 PM

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors are likely to declare racism a public health crisis after a unanimous vote Tuesday that also directed staff to create a group to address local racial disparities.

The “equity element group” is to be comprised of community members and experts in areas such as healthcare and education, according to county documents. The written resolution will be brought back to the supervisors at their next scheduled meeting on June 23.

Equity will be added as the 11th element group within the Countywide Vision — first adopted in 2011 — that officials call “a roadmap for the future.”

Other groups including wellness and public safety have created focused campaigns based on community discussion. The Vision2BActive, for example, promotes regular physical activity.

County Deputy Executive Officer Diana Alexander said once the new equity group is created, it will conduct a series of public meetings and surveys to receive input from stakeholders to determine racial disparities and formulate a strategy to tackle them.

“I can think of no better way to have this important discussion about the ills of racism and the importance of equity in our county,” she said.

The Board’s decision comes after comments made by June 2 meeting attendees, who requested the declaration of racism as a public health crisis, the San Bernardino Sun reported.

Professional groups, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, have released statements that cite studies linking racial prejudice and poor health outcomes.

AAP's 2019 statement said "the impact of racism has been linked to birth disparities and mental health problems in children and adolescents."

"The biological mechanism that emerges from chronic stress leads to increased and prolonged levels of exposure to stress hormones and oxidative stress at the cellular level," the statement read. "Prolonged exposure to stress hormones, such as cortisol, leads to inflammatory reactions that predispose individuals to chronic disease."

Black infants were more than twice as likely to die within the first year of life than a white infant, according to one study cited by the Academy. Black mothers also have a higher mortality rate than white mothers during childbirth, CDC data shows.

According to the American Heart Association, more than 40% of African Americans in the U.S. suffer from high blood pressure. They also experience higher rates of obesity and diabetes.

"To deny that change is necessary is to deny our existence," Bell said.

Pastor Samuel Casey, of New Life Christian Church and executive director of Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement, asked the Board that the newly formed equity group not be just "ceremonial."

"Please do not patronize us. Stand with us. Work with us. Incorporate us in the process," Casey said.

"Most importantly, those of you who are not black, please do not speak for us as it relates to what it means to suffer from racism. You've got to have those who are closest to the problem informing you what it means to be a victim and to have been victimized by a long-standing pandemic before COVID-19 called racism."

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***Follow him on Twitter [@DP\\_mestacio](https://twitter.com/DP_mestacio).***

Ongoing protests worldwide against police brutality after the death of unarmed black man George Floyd on May 25 have sparked increased dialogue on racial inequality in the county and elsewhere in the United States.

Floyd died after a Minneapolis police officer was recorded on video kneeling on Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes while he lay on the ground handcuffed. Two autopsy reports deemed his death a homicide.

If the resolution is approved, San Bernardino County would join other legislative bodies nationwide that have taken similar steps, such as Marion County in Indiana and Genesee County in Michigan, where the city of Flint is located.

Several people spoke in favor of the equity group and resolution at Tuesday's meeting.

"When we think of a public health crisis, we tend to envision the physical manifestations of it, not the intrinsic, deep wounds that people are forced to live with," Grayson Bell said. "As a black American who is the descendant of enslaved Africans and the occasional slave owner, it is evident that the trauma (of) my ancestors, and our African ancestors in general, has truly not left."

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# Apple Valley Town Council approves 'denouncing racial injustice' amid George Floyd protests

By Martin Estacio

Staff Writer

Posted Jun 10, 2020 at 8:56 PM

APPLE VALLEY — A resolution “supporting a just cause for racial equality and denouncing racial injustice” was passed by the Town Council earlier this week, with community members asking they do more.

The Council’s 3-0 decision Tuesday — Mayor Pro Tem Curt Emick and Council member Larry Cusack were absent — comes as protests condemning the death of unarmed black man George Floyd have sparked increased dialogue about racism, police brutality and systemic bias in America.

Hundreds gathered in the area of Jess Ranch Parkway and Bear Valley Road last week, joining other demonstrations that have occurred worldwide.

“I think we’re all shocked and saddened to see that happen,” Mayor Scott Nassif said of video that shows Floyd saying, “I can’t breathe,” as a Minneapolis police officer kneels on his neck. “And we didn’t want the town to go without an opinion and making a statement and how we made that statement.”

According to the resolution, “the Town of Apple Valley recognizes that racism and prejudice are not distant memories and that together we must dissent from the indifference, dissent from the apathy, dissent from the fear, the hatred and the mistrust recognizing that as Americans we must do better...”

“The Town of Apple Valley desires to be a part of the peaceful discussion for change, to assist in finding a solution and to work with others toward racial equality while denouncing racial injustice; understanding that change occurs not when standing in moments of comfort and convenience, but when standing in times of challenge and controversy,” the resolution reads.

But several community members, in written public comments, asked whether more steps were going to be taken.

“Denouncing racial injustice is the bare minimum that the leadership of our cities can do, it must be followed by meaningful action as well,” said Makayla Garza. “Funds and resources should be invested in lifting up communities that are disproportionately effected (sic) by over policing in the High Desert, not more police.”

Celena De Leon suggested the town donate money to local and nationwide organizations, such as Black Lives Matter charities. She also asked how the town’s response would ensure “law enforcement are also held accountable” when injustice or corruption are exposed.

The resolution’s only mention of police says “the Town of Apple Valley supports and commends its law enforcement professionals who protect and serve our communities understanding the utmost responsibility to respect and defend the life, health and welfare of others.”

Nassif and Council member Kari Leon said they weren’t aware of incidents like Floyd’s happening in the town.

“I’m proud of our community. I’m proud of where we live. I haven’t really seen anything locally because I think we’ve been through this 30 years ago and I think we’ve made a lot of changes,” Nassif said.

The Council renewed its Sheriff's contract last month to the tune of \$15.5 million, an increase of \$1.5 million from the previous fiscal year, the Daily Press reported.

As a result of labor negotiations between San Bernardino County and the Sheriff's union in 2019, 3% wage increases were guaranteed for all employees for five years starting last August in addition to other benefits.

Those trained in law enforcement will receive an additional 1% increase for four years starting January 2021.

Nassif said in a statement that the contract increase represented a "worrisome upward trend in the cost of keeping our residents, businesses, and community safe."

Town officials estimate the Sheriff's contract could reach almost \$20 million in 2025.

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The mayor touted the Apple Valley Police Activities League, which was formed in 2003 by the town's Police Department.

According to AVPAL's website, the nonprofit's mission is "uniting law enforcement and communities by providing youth programs which develop discipline, positive self-image, mutual trust and respect."

One of the programs Nassif mentioned was S.H.O.C.K., an intervention program "designed to combat the negative influences facing today's youth in society," according to AVPAL.

Other than talking about the youth programs, Council members did not address questions regarding funding of the local San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department station and suggestions to divest funding to other areas, an approach also known as defunding.

According to budget data, public safety funding for Sheriff's Department services takes up 40% of the town's general fund.



LOCAL NEWS • News

# Legal fireworks are back in Rialto after council rescinds temporary ban







Workers open a fireworks stand that benefits the Katella High School band and football team on E. Lincoln Ave. in Anaheim, CA on Friday, June 28, 2019. Friday was the first day of fireworks sales. (Photo by Paul Bersebach, Orange County Register/SCNG)

By **BRIAN WHITEHEAD** | [bwhitehead@scng.com](mailto:bwhitehead@scng.com) | San Bernardino Sun

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 1:15 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 1:16 p.m.



A recent ban on “safe and sane” fireworks was rescinded Tuesday, June 9, after the Rialto City Council discussed the impact prohibiting them a month before the July 4 holiday would have on community groups and and one of their most profitable fundraisers.

While again balking at taking the first step toward asking voters this year to decide the fate of legal fireworks in their city, a majority of elected officials agreed to convene a group of citizens at a later date to brainstorm solutions to the rampant use of illegal fireworks in town.

A ballot measure could be drafted for a subsequent election, likely at an additional cost.

Mayor Deborah Robertson and Councilmen Andy Carrizales and Rafael Trujillo voted for the moves.



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Councilman Ed Scott dissented and Councilman Joe Baca Jr. was absent.

As such, Rialto will remain one of seven San Bernardino County cities to allow the sale and use of legal fireworks – or those that do not leave the ground.

“A lot of people like to spend time with family” on July 4, Trujillo said ahead of the late-night vote, “and this is one way they get to celebrate something positive at a time when they feel the sky is falling in this community with everything going on.”

As they did when Rialto leaders broached prohibiting “safe and sane” fireworks in August, a number of representatives from local nonprofits contended their services and

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programs would take a revenue hit with no fireworks sales.

Paula Ramirez, secretary for Rialto Park Little League, suggested the ban would be “devastating” for a youth organization that had to call off its season ahead of Opening Day due to the current public health crisis.

conflict with nonprofit run by daughter

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Rialto to continue allowing sale and use of legal fireworks

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Raising money through fireworks sales would help soften the blow of a lost season, Ramirez said.

“This would be a silver lining,” Ramirez added. “The light at the end of a tunnel.”

According to city staffers, 25 organizations – from veterans groups to church groups to high school groups – had applied to open fireworks booths before the recent order temporarily outlawing their sale and use. The average fireworks stand raises around \$5,000 this time of year, staffers said.

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Affirming the ban, city leaders said Tuesday, especially after Rialto had to cancel its annual fireworks show due to the coronavirus crisis, not only would leave those groups out of pocket, but also eliminate a way for residents to celebrate the summer holiday during uncertain times.

The order now lifted, public safety personnel will inspect booths and issue permits later this month.

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# 2 homes burn in Redlands



By **BRIAN ROKOS** | brokos@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise  
PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 2:45 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 2:46 p.m.



Two adjacent homes burned Wednesday, June 10, in Redlands, a city spokesman said.

The fire was reported at about 10:30 a.m. The homes were in the 900 block of Tribune Street. One of the homes was vacant, and the residents of the other were able to evacuate, Redlands spokesman Carl Baker said. The flames spread from one home to the other.

The extent of the damage was not immediately available.

There was one minor injury to a firefighter reported, Baker said.



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The cause of the fire was under investigation Wednesday afternoon.

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# Sheriff's department asking for public's help in identifying battery suspects in Yucaipa



By **ROBERT GUNDRAN** | [rgundran@scng.com](mailto:rgundran@scng.com) |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 3:04 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 4:22 p.m.



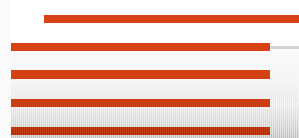
At least one fight broke out at a protest in Yucaipa last week and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is asking for the public's help in identifying two men who were carrying weapons.

The incident happened on Monday, June 1, when several people were gathered on the 34000 block of Yucaipa Boulevard. The sheriff's department said there were other people across the street protesting with signs.

"At some point, words were exchanged between both parties and several fights ensued," authorities said. "Victims and witnesses have come forward and requested police reports be made."

Two photos were released of men involved in the fighting. The sheriff's department said one of the men had a stun gun, and the other man had an extendable baton.

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Both men are wanted on suspicion of battery, officials said.

The sheriff's department asked anyone with information to contact it at 909-918-2005. Those who want to remain anonymous can call WeTip at 1-800-782-7463.

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## Inland Empire Catholic churches to reopen for public Mass this weekend

'Our hope is to make it as welcoming an environment as possible' despite the coronavirus changes required by the state, one pastor said





The Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community volunteers remove song books from pews as they prepare for Mass to resume this weekend in Redlands on Wednesday, June 10, 2020. (Photo by Terry Pierson, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **DEEPA BHARATH** | dbharath@scng.com | Orange County Register

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 4:36 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 4:39 p.m.



Catholic parishes in the Diocese of San Bernardino are preparing to reopen their sanctuaries for public, in-person Masses starting at 8 a.m. Saturday, June 13, three months after they were shut down to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Bishop Gerald Barnes has issued a 22-page list of directives for Masses, weddings, funerals, confessions and other sacraments that churches must follow to reopen and remain open.

This exhaustive list, which adheres to state-issued guidelines for reopening churches, includes, among other things, limiting the number of people to 25% of room capacity or 100 people, whichever is lower; maintaining a 6-foot physical distance; allowing enough time between services to sanitize the sanctuary; closing all drinking water fountains, baptismal fonts and decorative water features; and wearing face masks.

1 of 9

The Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community volunteer Maggie Rodriguez helps measure six feet to mark pews for the 100 parishioners that will be able to attend Mass this weekend in Redlands on Wednesday, June 10, 2020. (Photo by Terry Pierson, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)



## How Mass will be different

For Catholics who have attended Mass all their lives, the liturgy is likely to look and feel different as well. Priests won't use incense. Only one person will be allowed to sing, while maintaining a 10-foot distance from others. Parishioners won't recite prayers or parts of the liturgy. They will receive bread as part of the Communion, but no wine.

The directives also clearly state that parishioners and clergy should avoid all physical contact during Mass, such as shaking hands, hugging, kissing or "blessings that touch any part of the body."

Larger churches in the diocese especially are likely to appear empty, with only 100 people allowed inside at a time. But that's a small compromise to make to be able to gather and pray together again, said Debbie Aguilera, business administrator at St. Catherine of Siena in Rialto, which typically accommodates 1,200. She and other staff members at the church have been preparing this week to resume services, including distancing the pews and thoroughly sanitizing the sanctuary.

They'll have two services on Saturday and five on Sunday. But people can only get in on a first-come, first-served basis, Aguilera said.

"It sounds horrible to say that, but that's the way it has to be," she said. "We have to follow the rules."

Aguilera said different parts of the church will also not be accessible to the public, such as the family area, the wings at the side of the church and the Our Lady of Guadalupe room. Floors will be marked to denote 6-foot distancing.

## Catholics 'clamoring' for reopening

“It’s a different way of living, of doing church,” she said. “But I think people will be OK with it because they are anxious to return to church. For Catholics, to celebrate Mass together, as a community, is very important.”

Catholics in the diocese have been “clamoring to reopen the church,” especially so they can receive communion, said diocesan spokesman John Andrews.

“There haven’t been too many questions from the public about how it’s going to work,” he said. “We did hear from some concerned people about whether they are obligated to come back to church. The bishop has already extended dispensation for the weekly obligation to attend Mass for those who don’t have immunity, have health conditions or are elderly, or even because they may be anxious to come back.”

## Quiet Mass the new normal

Andrews said church will feel different because Mass is going to be quiet, without the choir, singing or recitation of the liturgy.

For priests in the diocese, this has been a period of adjustment, said the the Rev. Erik Esparza, pastor of The Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Community in Redlands.

“We are not used to celebrating Mass without people present,” he said, referring to Webcasting Mass, which will continue even after churches reopen. “It’s very different preaching to a camera. But we got beautiful notes and letters via mail and email from those watching at home. So I had to imagine that I was talking to all those people when I talked to the camera.”

His church is by no means going back to normal. It will limit services to four instead of nine. Members will also be able to make free reservations over the phone or online. That will help prevent people from lining up outside the church, Esparza said.

“We’ll have to start slow and see how many people come back,” he said. “Our hope is to make it as welcoming an environment as possible.”

Esparza said, at least for the first weekend, he plans to entrust the Masses to other priests so he can stand outside and welcome returning parishioners.

“We’ll get used to the procedures as we do it more and more,” he said. “Anything new can be worrisome, but we need to patient.”



BUSINESS • News

# Inland Empire grocery prices jump at 8.2% pace in May

Inflation at restaurants? 6.9% a year



## Inland Empire inflation vs. elsewhere

Change in local overall Consumer Price Index, year ended in May



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

STAFF GRAPHIC

By **JONATHAN LANSNER** | [jlansner@scng.com](mailto:jlansner@scng.com) | Orange County Register

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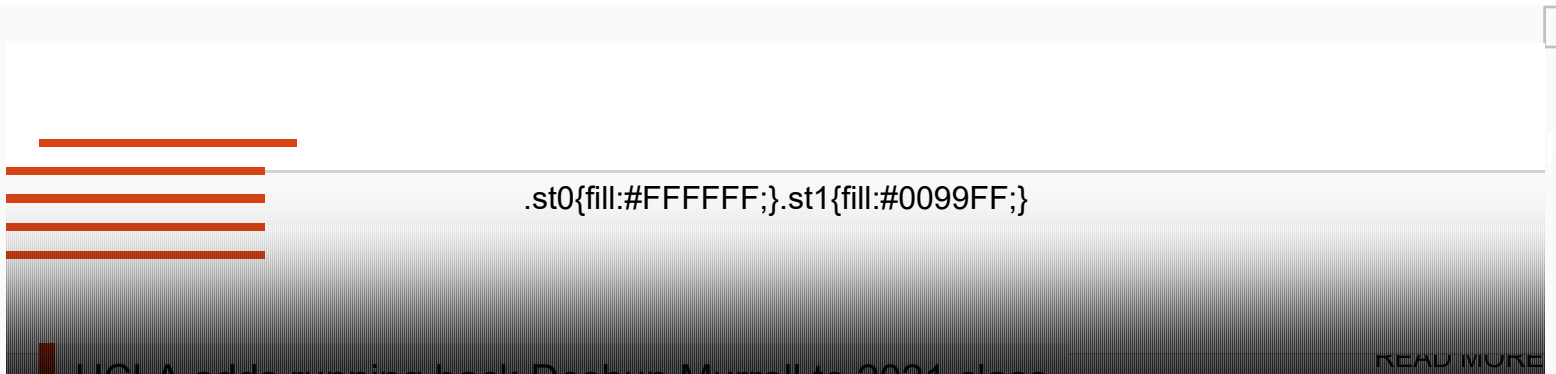
Inland Empire grocery prices rose at a 8.2% annual rate in May, according to the region's Consumer Price Index.

Coronavirus-related business limitations slashed the number of meals eaten out and made visits to grocery stores far more frequent for many households. That created shortages of some basic goods and cut any discounting at the grocery store.

The cost jump for "food at home" in Riverside and San Bernardino counties was stunning when compared with the 0.6% increase for all of 2019. May's increase in Los Angeles and Orange Counties was 4.2% and nationally it was 4.8%.

Inflation at restaurants wasn't much better. The Inland Empire CPI shows the cost of dining out rising at 6.9% a year vs. 4% gains last year. For May, L.A.-O.C. dining out was 4.9% pricier; nationally it rose 2.9%.

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Overall, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' inflation rate for Riverside and San Bernardino counties was otherwise tame, up at an annualized 0.9%. How does the Inland Empire compare? In L.A.-O.C., it's up 0.9% as prices rose 0.3% in San Diego; 0.8% in Western states; and 0.1% nationally.

*Here are other price trends for the Inland Empire over the last 12 months, according to the CPI report*

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**Shelter:** Ponder housing's impact on the region's household budgets: The latest Inland Empire CPI shows housing costs — the typical consumer's biggest expense — up 4.1% in a year. Local inflation, minus shelter costs, was down 0.9% in this period.

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**Big-ticket durables, such as furniture and appliances:** 0.5% higher.

**Apparel:** 2.2% cheaper.

**Recreation:** 1.3% higher.

**FYI, size matters:** Big metro areas in Western states saw consumer prices up at a 1.1% annual pace. Smaller Western communities? 0.5% inflation.

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**BREAKING NEWS** / Coachella, Stagecoach will not take place in 2020

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## **Coachella, Stagecoach will not take place in 2020**





by: [Erika Martin](#)

Posted: Jun 10, 2020 / 04:37 PM PDT / Updated: Jun 10, 2020 / 04:57 PM PDT

The blockbuster Coachella and Stagecoach music festivals are fully canceled for 2020, Riverside County health officials announced Wednesday.

The events that usually take place across three weekends in April were previously postponed until October. But as the COVID-19 pandemic shows no signs of easing in the region, public health officials decided they couldn't be held this year.

"I am concerned as indications grow that COVID-19 could worsen in the fall," Dr. Cameron Kaiser, the county's public health officer, said in a written statement. "In addition, events like Coachella and Stagecoach would fall under Governor Newsom's Stage 4, which he has previously stated would require treatments or a vaccine to enter. Given the projected circumstances and potential, I would not be comfortable moving forward."

The announcement comes a day after [Billboard reported](#) that AEG, owner of festival promoter Goldenvoice, laid off 15% of its staff and instituted pay cuts for many others in the face of uncertainty over whether the events could take place this year.

"It is clear now that live events with fans will not resume for many months and likely not until sometime in 2021," AEG chief Dan Beckerman wrote in an email to employees.

About 40% of Coachella ticket holders had already requested a refund, according to [Billboard](#).

Goldenvoice and AEG had not commented on the cancellations as of Wednesday afternoon. When the events were rescheduled for October, ticket holders were able to request a refund or transfer their pass to a new date.

*Check back for updates on this developing story.*



LOCAL NEWS • News

# Riverside County black leaders call racism a public health crisis





Nanice Ahmed, a 48-year-old Riverside resident, attended a Sunday, June 7, 2020, rally in downtown Riverside in the wake of George Floyd's death. She said she takes the coronavirus seriously, but needed to take a stand against racism. "Today's rally should be a representation of putting that love and support into action and to continue supporting black voices," she said. (File photo by Ryan Hagen, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **JEFF HORSEMAN** | [jhorseman@scng.com](mailto:jhorseman@scng.com) | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 4:54 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 4:55 p.m.

A coalition of African-American groups wants Riverside County to create a task force to explore how systemic racism has led to higher rates of the novel coronavirus and other chronic health problems and poor outcomes for African Americans.

The Riverside NAACP, in partnership with other organizations, sent a May 18 letter to the Riverside County Board of Supervisors with the request. Five African-American community leaders followed up by addressing the board Tuesday, June 9.

“We know that Riverside is not inherently leaning towards being racist,” said Pepi Jackson, president of the county’s Black Chamber of Commerce. “But we want to be able to have that conversation so that we can dive in to make some solutions (for) problems that we see coming down the line if we don’t address this issue.”

Corey Jackson, a Riverside County Board of Education member and the Riverside NAACP’s political action chair, asked the county to declare racism to be a public health crisis. He noted the letter was sent before George Floyd’s May 25 death and asked for “swift action” by the board to put the task force on its next meeting agenda.

“Our stance is that racism is a public health issue, which is a cause of the underlying issues that are creating the disproportionate deaths (among African Americans) of COVID 19,” Jackson said in an interview Wednesday, June 10.

“The task force’s mission needs to be to rectify the historical underlying conditions that racism has caused to make sure that there’s greater health, educational, and economical outcomes for African Americans.”

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The board acted quickly to form a coronavirus economic recovery task force when chambers of commerce officials asked for help, Jackson added.

County spokesman Brooke Federico said Monday that the county “is meeting with stakeholders to discuss ways to engage the community and further address these health disparities.”

An announcement could come later this month, she said.

African-American deaths from COVID-19 are almost two times greater than would be expected based on their share of the population, National Public Radio reported May 30. In California, African Americans make up about 6% of the population but account for 10% of COVID-19 deaths, NPR and census data show.

In Riverside County, African Americans, who make up 6% of the county's population, account for 4% of cases and 8% of the county's coronavirus deaths, county Director of Public Health Kim Saruwatari said during a June 5 media briefing.

African Americans in the county have higher emergency-room and hospitalization rates for hypertension and higher emergency room rates for asthma and diabetes than other races and ethnicities, and African Americans trail only Latinos in the percentage of adults without health insurance, county data show.

"While we're not seeing the same level of COVID-19 disparities that have been reported elsewhere, we at public health have seen health disparities that have taken the toll in communities of color and show up in higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, certain cancers and low infant birth weights," Saruwatari said.

"These are issues created by a system that discriminates against a segment of the population and has taken generations to get us to where we are now," she said. "This must change."

On Tuesday, San Bernardino County supervisors asked officials to draft a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis and adding "equity" as an element of a countywide plan.

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LOCAL NEWS • News

## Riverside County has 321 more coronavirus cases, 7 new deaths



By **JEFF HORSEMAN** | [jhorseman@scng.com](mailto:jhorseman@scng.com) | The Press-Enterprise  
PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 4:44 p.m. | UPDATED: June 11, 2020 at 12:06 a.m.



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Riverside County has almost 10,000 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus and 372 deaths from COVID-19 in updated numbers posted Wednesday, June 10, on the county public health website.

The 9,911 cases represent a 3% increase from the Tuesday, June 9, update while the death toll rose by seven. The daily updates usually reflect what's happened over the course of a few days, since it takes time for new diagnoses and deaths to be reported to public health.

Countywide, more than 5,500 have officially recovered from COVID-19. These are people who are no longer in isolation, show no symptoms and have had their public health cases closed.

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County COVID-19 hospitalizations rose by seven from Tuesday to 227, with 73 of those patients in intensive care, up two from the day before.

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There have been 242 confirmed cases in county jails with 207 recoveries, while 215 cases have been confirmed in state prisons in the county.

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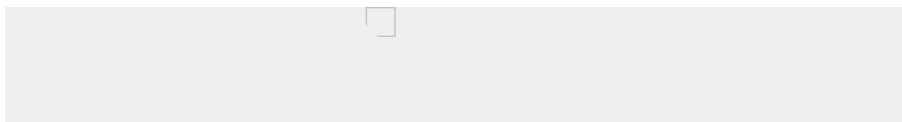
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About 1,300 cases have been confirmed in the county's long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, including 823 cases among patients and 485 among staff.

More than 143,000 COVID-19 tests have been conducted countywide.

See a list of community-by-community cases here.







NEWS  CRIME + PUBLIC SAFETY • News

## Riverside County Sheriff's Department suspends use of sleeper holds





Law enforcement officers advance up Orange St. on Monday night, June 1, 2020 in downtown Riverside as protesters failed to disperse following a protest over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. (Photo by Will Lester, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

By **ERIC LICAS** | [elicas@scng.com](mailto:elicas@scng.com) |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 6:14 p.m. | UPDATED: June 11, 2020 at 1:37 a.m.



The Riverside County Sheriff's Department suspended the training and deployment of carotid restraint control holds effective Wednesday June 10, after the death of George Floyd brought nationwide scrutiny to the use of force by law enforcement.

The changes mirror similar decisions to at least temporarily end the deployment of the technique, commonly referred to as a sleeper hold, which were announced since Sunday by law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles, Orange and Riverside counties, as well as the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Other Inland agencies halting the practice include the Riverside and Corona police departments.

Prior to Wednesday's announcement, RCSD staff had been authorized to use carotid holds when a "person is violently resisting," or "by words and actions, has demonstrated an intention to be violent and reasonably appears to have the potential to harm..." according to the department's standards

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manual. Deputies were also instructed to inform a supervisor and those subjected to the maneuver whenever it is deployed.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5



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Minneapolis officer Derek Chauvin did not employ what is traditionally defined as a carotid restraint hold, which involves placing one's hands or arms on the sides of the neck to block blood flow to the brain. However, groups outraged by the death of Floyd and others in law enforcement custody have called for agencies to ban the technique and others like it.

The California Legislature is considering a bill that would forbid officers and deputies from using carotid holds. The measure is backed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who ordered the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to halt instruction of the hand-to-hand technique.

“If (the) State Legislature eliminates the possibility for peace officers to use the Carotid Restraint

Control Hold, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department will update the policy accordingly," Riverside County Sheriff's officials said in a news release announcing an indefinite suspension on the use of the restraint technique.

Sheriff's staff are not authorized or trained to use maneuvers referred to as choke holds or strangleholds, RCSD Cpl. Lionel Murphy said. Those techniques are different from carotid holds, and work by using hands or arms to constrict the front of a person's throat, limiting their ability to draw breath.

A national choke hold ban is one of the measures included in the Justice in Police Act authored by Sens. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., and Cory Booker, D-N.J. The proposed legislation would also make it easier to prosecute and recover damages from law enforcement officers involved in alleged wrongdoing and create a "National Police Misconduct Registry."

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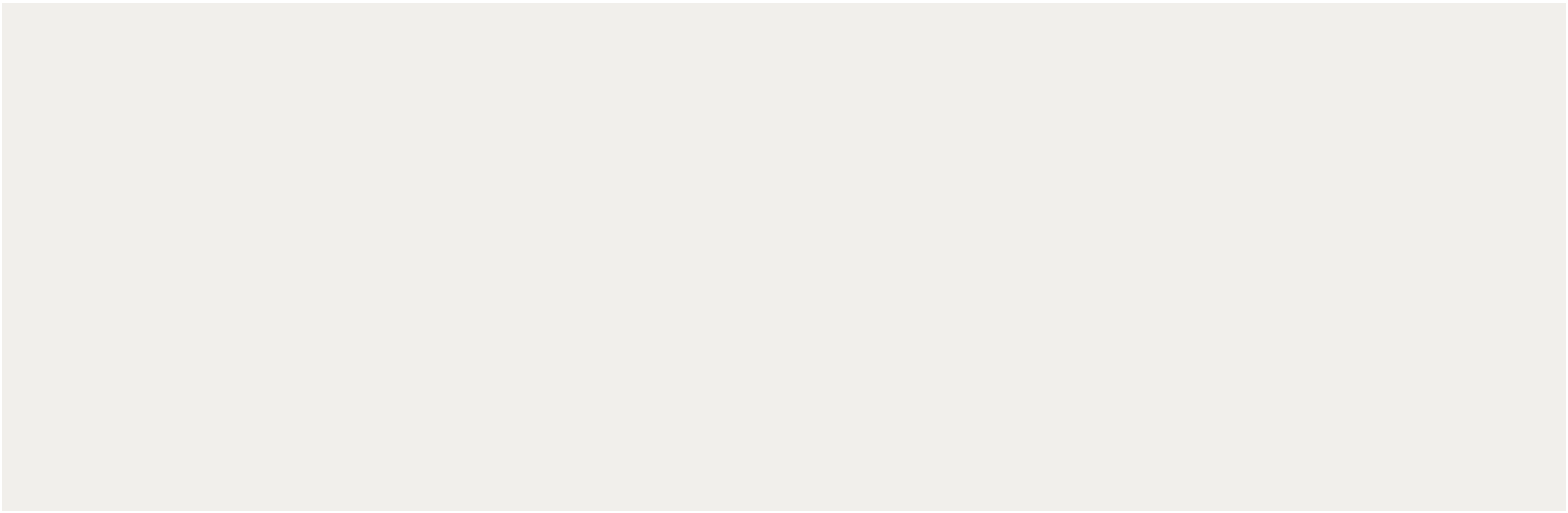
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NEWS  LOCAL NEWS • News

# Orange County supervisor says she expects announcement relaxing mask requirement on Thursday



Daniela Newlin, right, and her daughter, Samantha Gordon, don masks as customers enter Old Navy at Bella Terra in Huntington Beach, CA, on Tuesday, May 26, 2020. The store reopened today after being closed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. (Photo by Jeff Gritchen, Orange County Register/SCNG)

By **CITY NEWS SERVICE** | [news@socalnews.com](mailto:news@socalnews.com) |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 8:42 p.m. | UPDATED: June 11, 2020 at 9:11 a.m.



Orange County Health Care Agency Director Dr. Clayton Chau, who is also serving as the interim public health officer, is expected on Thursday, June 1, to issue a new order making it a “strong recommendation” people in the county wear a face covering instead of a mandate during the coronavirus pandemic.

The expected change in policy comes days after Dr. Nichole Quick, who issued the mask mandate last month, abruptly resigned Monday following threats and a protest in front of her home, as well as push back from Orange County supervisors.

Orange County Supervisor Lisa Bartlett said Chau is expected on Thursday to alter Quick’s order to make mask wearing “strongly recommended” instead of required – the new order would take effect at midnight that day.

Bartlett said she wants to keep in place the county’s mask ordinance adopted in April for grocery






stores and other retail businesses.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5

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“I want to keep that in effect, not only to protect the public, but the workers,” Bartlett said. “There are certain businesses where you can’t do the six feet of social distancing.”

Bartlett said the mask order will help boost confidence of diners and shoppers.

“I think the public at-large would feel more comfortable knowing that businesses are taking those extra precautions when they can’t socially distance,” Bartlett said.

During a Board of Supervisor’s meeting on Tuesday, Chau defended Quick’s mask order, which was issued in May as county officials received permission from the state to reopen some businesses, including dining in restaurants.

Quick had said she issued the mask mandate, which is required whenever a resident cannot maintain

six feet of social distancing, because she feared an outbreak of cases as more people congregated as stay-at-home orders were relaxed.

On Friday, the county is expected to a further relax restrictions on businesses to allow bars, gyms, family entertainment centers, community pools and others allowed in the beginning of Stage 3 reopenings in the state.

Chau was appointed interim public health officer on Tuesday. At the time, he declined to say when the order might be revised, suggesting it was something he would discuss it with the county's next permanent health officer.

Chau, who also has a doctorate in clinical psychology, was appointed head of the Health Care Agency in April to succeed Richard Sanchez, who took over as head of CalOptima, the county's insurance program for low-income residents.

*Staff Writer Alicia Robinson contributed to this report.*

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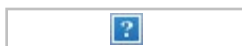
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Los Angeles Times

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CALIFORNIA

Gyms, museums, hotels, day camps, arena sports can reopen in L.A. County on Friday



Ricky Funez's Ten Goose Boxing gym has been closed since March 15. L.A. County announced that gyms and fitness facilities will be allowed to reopen Friday following state mandated safety protocols. (Irfan Khan / Los Angeles Times)

By [COLLEEN SHALBY](#) | STAFF WRITER

JUNE 10, 2020 | 2:09 PM **UPDATED** 2:47 PM

Los Angeles County on Wednesday announced that gyms and fitness facilities, pro-league arenas without audiences, day camps, museums, galleries, zoos, aquariums, campgrounds, RV parks, outdoor recreational areas including swimming pools, music, film and television production and hotels for leisure travel [will be allowed to reopen Friday](#).

The further reopening comes as 1,275 new cases and an additional 61 deaths linked to COVID-19 were reported by L.A. County public health officials.

Nail salons, tattoo shops, bars and wineries, [movie theaters](#), live performance theaters, entertainment centers, concert halls and venues, stadiums, arenas, gaming facilities, theme parks and festivals are still closed in the county. Despite lifted restrictions, parties, gatherings and mixing of households is still not allowed.

“No, we are completely not out of the woods, we are still in in the middle of the woods and we still have a lot of risk,” Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said. “I know how desperate people are to get be able to get back to events but that is not in our health officer order nor is it in the sate health officer order.” The only exceptions to assembly are political protests and religious worship.



1/40

A worker directs drivers at a drive-up testing site for COVID-19 outside of Jackie Robinson Stadium at UCLA.

(Genaro Molina/Los Angeles Times)

Officials said they will announce safety protocols for those businesses on Thursday and that operations that comply may reopen the next day. Strict infection control directives will be in place and visitors and staff be required to practice physical distancing and wear cloth face coverings. Each newly reopened area will have limited capacity and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures.

The move marks another major step in reopening the economy despite continued increases in both the number of new coronavirus infections and deaths related to the illness. Los Angeles County remains the epicenter in California of the pandemic, with [more than 2,700 deaths](#), and is one of 10 counties the state is currently monitoring for increased transmission of the virus.

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Dr. Christina Ghaly, director of health services for L.A. County, said that the transmission rate of the virus is likely to continue increasing overtime.

"If transmission has indeed increased as recent data has suggested it has, the model predicts that we will have a continued increase in hospital patient volume in the next two to four weeks," she said. That could mean that the number of beds in intensive care units may become inadequate, she said. County officials will continue to work with state officials and hospitals to monitor for such changes, and continue to warn residents to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing practices.

On Tuesday, for the second day in a row, the [state reported more than 3,000 cases](#), bringing the total number of infections to over 137,000.

The bulk of the cases are in L.A. County, and a concerning sign is that the [coronavirus transmission rate](#) in the county appears to be climbing again.

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Hospitalizations for COVID-19 in Los Angeles County did not significantly decline last week compared to the previous week. That's the first time that has happened since hospitalizations were at their peak on the last week of April. There were an average of 2,010 hospitalized patients daily last week, with confirmed or suspected coronavirus infections, down 0.1% from the previous week's daily average of 2,012. There are currently 1,458 hospitalized individuals. Of that group, 29% are in intensive care and 20% of those are on ventilators.

But authorities say it is still possible to strike the right balance between reopening society and adhering to strict safety rules. They expect additional infections as more people go back to old routines but said that following social distancing and other protocols can reduce the risk of getting sick.

State officials earlier this week said that [movie theaters](#) and bars could reopen if counties felt it was safe to do so. Neither of those facilities were included in L.A. County's plans announced Wednesday.

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Colleen Shalby is a reporter for the Los Angeles Times. She previously worked at PBS NewsHour in Washington, D.C. She's a graduate of George Washington University and a native of Southern California.

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[Coronavirus transmission rate climbing in L.A. County as economy reopens, old routines return](#)

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Los Angeles Times

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CALIFORNIA

Newsom says no turning back on reopening plans, even as coronavirus cases climb





Traffic flows once again into the Dodgers Stadium parking lot for a free drive-up test for COVID-19 in Los Angeles on June 9, 2020. (Genaro Molina / Los Angeles Times)

By [COLLEEN SHALBY](#) | STAFF WRITER

JUNE 10, 2020 | 12:19 PM

California continues to see a surge in coronavirus cases, an expected consequence as stay-at-home orders implemented to stem the spread of the illness are lifted and more sectors of the economy reopen.

On Tuesday, for the second day in a row, the [state reported more than 3,000 cases](#), bringing the total number of infections to over 137,000, the bulk of which is still in Los Angeles County.

Despite the upward trajectory of cases and a growing death toll, there are no plans to reverse course, officials said.

“As we phase in, in a responsible way, a reopening of the economy, we’ve made it abundantly clear that we anticipate an increase in the total number of positive cases,” Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday while speaking with Oakland community leaders.

“But we’ve also made it abundantly clear the concurrent recognition and commitment that we are in a substantially different place than we were 90 days ago. We have [hundreds of millions of masks](#) now in our possession.”

The governor pointed to the state’s increased testing ability, hospital capacity and an available supply of ventilators — key metrics in the decision to ease statewide modifications — as reasoning for pressing ahead.



SCIENCE

The coronavirus entered Northern California many times, from many places



June 9, 2020

Newsom said significant progress in the battle against the virus has been made since the pandemic first erupted in the United States earlier this year, “from a human resource perspective, human capital perspective, a physical capital perspective, a PPE perspective.”

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Ten counties — [Fresno](#), [Imperial](#), [Kings](#), [Tulare](#), [San Bernardino](#), [San Joaquin](#), Los Angeles, [Santa Clara](#), [Sacramento](#) and [Ventura](#) — [are currently being monitored](#) for an increase in the number of transmissions or hospitalizations. A spike in numbers has been linked to outbreaks in jails, prisons and skilled nursing facilities as well as informal and formal gatherings over the past two weeks, according to the California Department of Public Health.

As restrictions have been lifted after nearly three months of quarantine, personal reunions have begun, despite an ongoing prohibition of gatherings beyond political protests or worship services.

In Sacramento County, [a surge in hospitalizations](#) over the past weekend were linked to members of the same household who gathered recently for birthday parties and a funeral. Dr. Olivia Kasirye, the county’s health officer, said many people think “we’re out of the woods,” despite the reality.

Ventura County, [among the first to ease coronavirus restrictions in Southern California](#), saw a similar spike in hospitalizations over the weekend, from 21 Friday to 43 on Monday. There are currently 39 individuals who are hospitalized, 12 of whom are in intensive care.

The statewide surge in the number of COVID-19 cases does not include any [potential spread from protests](#) in the aftermath of George Floyd's death, as the incubation period for the virus can take up to 14 days. But [officials fear the demonstrations will lead to another spike](#) in case count.

While many at the protests have worn face coverings, it is near impossible to keep a six-foot distance in the crowds. Officials are [encouraging anyone who participated to get tested](#) and to self-quarantine if they were potentially exposed to someone who is infected.

#### CALIFORNIA

Who gets the blame if California sees major new coronavirus outbreaks with reopening?

June 10, 2020

State officials are working with county leaders to assess whether their jurisdictions are ready to move further into the reopening stage.

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[In L.A. County](#), the state's most populous, officials are monitoring the positivity rate to spot signs of an increase in transmission. Additionally, state officials are providing more resources and personal protective equipment to the county's 235 skilled nursing facilities, where the testing of staff and residents has become a priority after prior scrutiny.

The county is one of several that could decide to [reopen movie theaters](#), as well as [bars, gyms and day camps](#), after state officials approved it for accelerating its reopening timeline.

*Times staff writer Taryn Luna contributed to this report.*



WORLD NEWS JUNE 9, 2020 / 4:06 PM / UPDATED 12 HOURS AGO

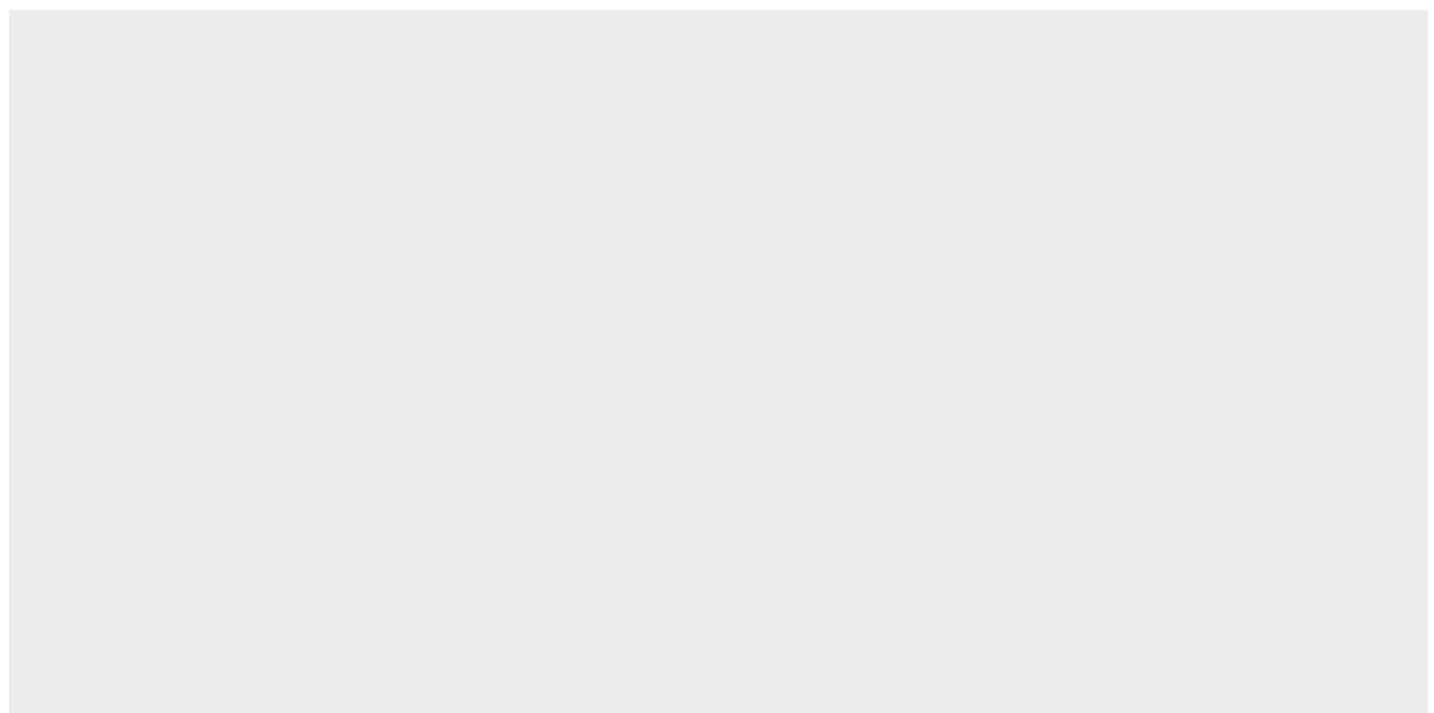
# Widespread mask-wearing could prevent COVID-19 second waves: study

Kate Kelland

3 MIN READ



LONDON (Reuters) - Population-wide face mask use could push COVID-19 transmission down to controllable levels for national epidemics, and could prevent further waves of the pandemic disease when combined with lockdowns, according to a British study on Wednesday.



The research, led by scientists at the Britain's Cambridge and Greenwich Universities, suggests lockdowns alone will not stop the resurgence of the new SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, but that even homemade masks can dramatically reduce transmission rates if enough people wear them in public.

“Our analyses support the immediate and universal adoption of face masks by the public,” said Richard Stutt, who co-led the study at Cambridge.

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He said combining widespread mask use with social distancing and some lockdown measures, could be “an acceptable way of managing the pandemic and re-opening economic activity” before the development of an effective vaccine against COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the coronavirus.

The study's findings were published in the “Proceedings of the Royal Society A” scientific

journal.

At the onset of the pandemic, scientific evidence on the effectiveness of face masks in slowing transmission of respiratory diseases was limited, and there was no data on COVID-19 since it was a previously unknown disease.

But, prompted by some new research in recent weeks, the World Health Organization said on Friday it now recommends that everyone wear fabric face masks in public to try to reduce disease spread.

In this study, researchers linked the dynamics of spread between people with population-level models to assess the effect on the disease's reproduction rate, or R value, of different scenarios of mask adoption combined with periods of lockdown.

The R value measures the average number of people that one infected person will pass the disease on to. An R value above 1 can lead to exponential growth.

The study found that if people wear masks whenever they are in public it is twice as effective at reducing the R value than if masks are only worn after symptoms appear.



Slideshow (5 Images)

In all scenarios the study looked at, routine face mask use by 50% or more of the population reduced COVID-19 spread to an R of less than 1.0, flattening future disease waves and allowing for less stringent lockdowns.

Experts not directly involved in the latest British study were divided over its conclusions.

Brooks Pollock, a Bristol University infectious disease modelling expert, said the likely impact of masks could be much smaller than predicted.

Trish Greenhalgh, an Oxford University professor, said the findings were encouraging and suggested masks “are likely to be an effective population measure”.

Reporting by Kate Kelland; Editing by Aurora Ellis and Alex Richardson

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L.A. officials want more money for community policing. Activists say it misses the point



City Councilman Joe Buscaino co-sponsored the proposal. (Los Angeles Times)

By [EMILY ALPERT REYES](#) | STAFF WRITER

JUNE 10, 2020 | 6:27 PM

Two members of the Los Angeles City Council are calling for finding savings from the police budget — and plugging that money back into expanding a community policing program across the city.

Los Angeles City Councilmen Joe Buscaino and Marqueece Harris-Dawson declared in their proposal that “it is time to expand the Community Safety Partnership program within LAPD and begin to transform the department into one based upon community policing,” citing a recent study that found that residents in the targeted areas felt safer.

But the move was met with disdain by Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles and other activist groups that have called to dramatically defund the Police Department and reinvest the money in other services to address community needs.

“It’s a ruse,” said Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles organizer Paula Minor, complaining that



the move would simply put money back into the Police Department, instead of funding programs better suited to help the community. "This is another example of our society giving everything to the police — and the police cannot handle all social problems."

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The new proposal from Buscaino and Harris-Dawson comes as Mayor Eric Garcetti and other city officials, including Council President Nury Martinez, have called for reinvesting up to \$150 million pulled from the LAPD budget into programs serving communities of color — a much smaller shift than protesters and activists have called for.

Buscaino and Harris-Dawson did not specify how much money they were seeking to redirect to the program, but Buscaino said their motion was "not inconsistent" with Martinez' proposal.

The push to overhaul policing has gained new momentum amid ongoing protests in L.A. and nationwide over police brutality. But many L.A. politicians and activists differ sharply over what kind of change is needed.

**CALIFORNIA**

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June 10, 2020

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## Do You Know What Makes the 2020 Mazda CX-30 Stand Out?

By Mazda

Take a look at the all-new 2020 Mazda CX-30

The Community Safety Partnership, which was launched nearly a decade ago in Jordan Downs and other L.A. housing developments and [expanded](#) over time, has been promoted as a more holistic approach to public safety.

Police officers apply for the program and commit to stay in the same areas for several years, working with residents on youth programs, job training and other initiatives.

In a recent [op-ed](#) for The Times, civil rights attorney and CSP program co-founder Connie Rice described it as a “guardian-style approach that rewards problem-solving engagement between officers and the communities they protect,” needed to replace a “warrior enforcement culture.”

A [UCLA study](#) released in March, whose funders included the Ballmer Group and the Caruso real estate company, found that the CSP had prevented crime and made residents feel safer.

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The councilmen are not the only people advocating to expand the program: Garcetti called it “highly successful” last week and expressed hope that the state and federal government would help fund its expansion. At a press conference following protests, Police Commission President Eileen Decker said the city was committed to adding more CSP sites.

Buscaino, an LAPD reserve officer who sat on a UCLA research and evaluation advisory committee for the CSP program, said the city has “quantifiable proof” that the program works. He credited CSP with reducing homicides and assaults, saying that “homicide numbers don’t lie,” and praised the model for instilling trust between police and the community.

“I don’t believe defunding is the right answer,” Buscaino said, when asked about the criticism from activists. “Reform and reorganization is the way to move forward.”

Local activists pushing to defund the police department excoriated the idea. Hamid Khan,

coordinator of the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition, complained that “the underlying message remains that they continue to police their way out of the problem,” arguing that money should instead go to youth development or other programs to address community needs.

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Khan also pointed to a [different study](#), undertaken by the nonprofit Urban Institute and funded by the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, which found that residents didn’t necessarily attribute the decreased crime in their areas to the CSP program and “generally do not trust the police and expressed concerns about mistreatment.”

Harris-Dawson was not available Wednesday for an interview, according to his spokesman. The proposal to expand the CSP was seconded by Councilman John Lee.

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CALIFORNIA

# 'Massive outbreak' swept through nursing home as coronavirus testing lagged



Norwalk Skilled Nursing & Wellness Center, which suffered a significant COVID-19 outbreak among staff and residents following delayed testing. (Jack Dolan/Los Angeles Times)

By [JACK DOLAN](#), [BRITTNY MEJIA](#)

JUNE 11, 2020 | 5 AM

When Budgie Amparo's mom needed a nursing home, he was in a unique position to help. As a nurse in charge of quality control for a chain of such facilities, he picked the Norwalk Skilled Nursing & Wellness Center, a home with the highest quality rating from Medicare.

So he was shocked to learn, in mid-May, that the home had a resident with COVID-19 and that administrators did not begin testing staff — the most likely spreaders of the virus within facilities — until more than a week later. So far, at least 42 residents and 32 employees have tested positive, Los Angeles County data show. At least six have died.

The situation underscores how quickly the coronavirus can spread in skilled nursing homes and how essential early, [widespread testing](#) is.

"The lag time was way too long," Amparo said. "Now they have this massive outbreak."

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Dr. David Silver, CEO of [Rockport](#) Healthcare Services, the company that oversees Norwalk

Skilled Nursing and more than 70 other homes in California, acknowledged that it took “a little more than a week” to test staff after the first resident turned up positive. Asked if testing sooner would have limited the outbreak, he said, “I won’t dispute that.”

Since the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, elderly nursing home residents, who are by far the most at risk, have suffered a devastating toll. As [of Tuesday](#), COVID-19 had killed more than 2,000 residents and 64 employees of skilled nursing facilities in California.

Despite a recent uptick in cases as the California economy begins to reopen, the virus appears to be under control in hospitals and other healthcare settings. But nursing homes like the one in Norwalk, which managed to keep the bug at bay for months, are still suffering outbreaks.

Most health officials say frequent testing of staff is the best way to protect residents and slow the spread, but they have struggled to bring it about.

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County health officials, recognizing the threat posed by healthcare workers who frequently work at more than one home and may be infected but asymptomatic, vowed in late April to test residents and staff at all of the county’s nearly 400 skilled nursing facilities. A month later, The Times found, they had managed to finish the job at only about a third of them. As of Sunday, there were still 71 that had not tested everyone.





The Norwalk Skilled Nursing and Wellness Centre. (Myung J. Chun/Los Angeles Times)

State health officials have also promised to test everyone at nursing homes, but implementation remains scattershot, with no clear rules about how the testing plan will work or who will pay.

At the end of May, Norwalk Skilled Nursing, a single-story building occupying about a city block on Imperial Highway, was among the homes county health officials had not gotten around to testing yet.

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More than half a dozen employees, who spoke with Times reporters on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation, said the facility has suffered from a severe shortage of personal protective equipment and has allowed nurse aides to move back and forth between the "dirty" isolation unit meant to contain infected residents and the "clean" unit meant for those who weren't sick yet. The home also faced the threat of a mass walkout

by a scared, exhausted staff unless they start getting hazard pay, the employees said.

"It's chaos," said a certified nursing assistant. "The patients are getting infected, the employees are getting infected."

As the number of infected residents climbed last month, several nursing assistants said they pleaded with the administration to start testing staff but that their bosses instead waited for the health department to provide test kits, which cost an estimated \$150 each.

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Some employees who had been working with COVID-19 positive residents said they sought out tests on their own after developing symptoms, instead of waiting for the county. One of them suffered chills, exhaustion and a severe headache; the other a fever.



Both tests came back positive.

"All they care about is the money they're bringing in here," said one of the nursing assistants about her bosses. "We fear for our lives, for our families' lives."

Silver, the CEO of Rockport, said his company had been in regular contact with both state and county health officials. When the first positive patient turned up at the Norwalk facility in mid-May, county officials informed him that, "they were the ones who take care of testing," Silver said.

"They couldn't do it that day, but they would find a day," Silver said county officials told him. In the end, it took more than a week for the county to provide the test swabs, Silver said.

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County health officials did not respond to a request for comment on the testing delay.

Elena Houmsi, the nurse in charge of quality assurance at the Norwalk facility, was one of several employees who confirmed that healthcare workers have been moving back and forth between the isolation zone with coronavirus infected patients and the rest of the facility where the uninfected residents remain.

"There are times we are short of staff," Houmsi said. "So that's what they have to do."

Silver said he had no knowledge of staff moving between the dirty and clean sides of the building, but acknowledged that would be "against all of our protocols."

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Last week, Rockport suspended the Norwalk facility's long-serving top administrator as well as Houmsi.

Those suspensions were handed down because the two failed to execute a transfer of about 20 patients with COVID-19 to another Rockport facility, Houmsi said in an interview. Rockport wanted the patients transferred so they wouldn't have to pay Norwalk nurses extra to care for the infected residents, Houmsi said.

Silver denied that the transfers were proposed to save money. The idea was to send the patients to another Rockport home that has been designated by the county as a COVID-19 positive facility, where they would get, "the highest level of care," he said.

Those transfers have been put on hold, Silver said.

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The Times [reported last month](#) that several experts raised questions when L.A. County designated another Rockport home, Country Villa South, as its first COVID-19 positive facility. The idea was to create a landing place for patients leaving hospitals with COVID-19 who had nowhere else to go. Infected residents from other facilities that were trying to limit the spread could also be sent there.

But Country Villa South has the lowest possible Medicare quality rating and a history of failing to follow infection control regulations. Critics, including the former CEO of Rockport, wondered if the company was motivated by the fact that it can charge Medicare nearly four times as much for a COVID-19 patient as it can for a typical resident whose bills are paid by Medi-Cal, the state insurance system for the poor.

Silver denied that the higher reimbursement rate was the motive for seeking the COVID-19 positive designation. He and his company were "doing our part" at a time of unprecedented need, he said.

Since then, the county has designated 21 COVID-positive facilities, including several others managed by Rockport.

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Amparo, who worked for Rockport when he put his mother in the Norwalk facility a few years ago, now works for another nursing home chain. But he left his 90-year old mom where she was because it had become her home.

When he discovered what he considered a delay in testing, he said, he reported it to the county health department. He is not sure if they followed up, he said, but he's more concerned about the failure of Rockport.

"Where is the management company that is supposed to be providing services to a building in crisis, where are they?" he asked.

After filing his complaint, his next move was to pull his mother out of the home. She has tested positive for the coronavirus, but is doing well, he said.

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Other families weren't as fortunate.

Last month, Roma Rathell got a call from facility staff that her 87-year-old mother, Angelina Pascual, had been exposed to the virus after using a bathroom that a COVID positive patient had used. Soon after, Pascual, who had lived in the facility for about four years, tested positive.

"I was hoping that she just needed to be quarantined for 14 days and she'll be OK," Rathell said. But after Pascual ran a fever, she was transported to the hospital, where her condition soon deteriorated.

Pascual died on May 26.

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Silver declined to comment on her case.



NEWS • News

## California courts end \$0 bail statewide order imposed for coronavirus



By **ASSOCIATED PRESS** |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 7:38 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 7:38 p.m.



By DON THOMPSON

SACRAMENTO — California judicial leaders on Wednesday ended a statewide policy of imposing \$0 bail for misdemeanors and lower-level felonies that reduced jail populations by more than 20,000 suspects during the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic.

The state's Judicial Council said the policy helped ease crowding in jails, which are potential hot spots for spreading the virus.

But it said a uniform statewide policy is no longer appropriate as the state's 58 counties vary widely in

how quickly they ease stay-at-home orders aimed at slowing spread of the virus.

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The rule-making arm of the judicial system abruptly delayed other votes Wednesday on ending emergency orders suspending foreclosures and evictions during the pandemic, after state lawmakers criticized the courts for preparing to act before they can enact new safeguards.

Individual counties can keep the \$0 bail policy “where necessary to protect the health of the community, the courts, and the incarcerated” after the statewide policy ends June 20, said Justice Marsha Slough, a member of the council.

Council members voted 17-2 to rescind the statewide order.

California Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye simultaneously ended her statewide order allowing

additional time for defendants to be arraigned. That means they must once again face a judge within 48 hours.

Law enforcement leaders had roundly criticized the bail reduction since it took effect in early April, with some publicizing examples where offenders were freed only to be quickly re-arrested.

But public defenders said the \$0 bail caused no significant increase in crime and should continue, particularly as the nation confronts racial inequalities in the criminal justice system.

“There’s a nationwide uprising against systemic racism, and the council chooses this moment to give counties permission to return to the mass pre-trial incarceration of Black and Brown people,” Alameda County Chief Public Defender Brendon Woods said in a statement. He had urged the council to keep the rule in place until January.

Ending the bail order will “disproportionately devastate communities of color,” San Francisco Public Defender Mano Raju said before the council announced its decision.

Even under the \$0 bail order, prosecutors could ask judges to raise or deny bail for particular suspects they feared could be dangerous. Suspects accused of violent felonies, serious sex offenses, domestic violence, stalking, or driving under the influence were not eligible.

The council said it was ending the policy as of June 20 in part because state prisons are preparing to once again accept transfers from county jails as of June 19, which will also help with jail crowding.

The bail decision comes as voters prepare to consider in November a ballot measure that would decide whether to replace the current money bail system.

“This policy is coming to an end at a time when the racial and economic injustice of wealth-based incarceration is crystal clear,” said Jonathan Underland, spokesman for the End Money Bail

campaign.

Eric Nuñez, president of the state’s police chiefs’ association, praised the courts’ reconsideration, noting that chiefs feared the bail rule “would result in inappropriate early release of potentially dangerous offenders.”

Cantil-Sakauye announced about an hour before the votes were to be tallied on other orders dealing with evictions and foreclosures that Gov. Gavin Newsom and legislative leaders “will need more time to sort through various policy proposals.”

She delayed the decision after lawmakers and housing advocates predicted a surge in evictions and homelessness if the courts continued with plans to lift the eviction ban in early August.

California already had a massive homelessness and housing affordability crisis, said Democratic Assemblyman David Chiu of San Francisco, and “during this pandemic, millions of renters have been hanging by a thread.”

Chiu announced legislation Wednesday that would bar renters from being evicted for non-payment for 90 days after state and local coronavirus emergency orders end. It would give renters another 12 months before landlords could file civil actions to collect unpaid rent. Tenants would have to keep up with their current rent during that 12 months or potentially face eviction.

California Apartment Association CEO Tom Bannon said most of the state’s major cities still have bans on evicting those affected by the pandemic at a time when many landlords also are hurting financially. The Judicial Council “did just one big blanket cutoff,” he said, applying it to all evictions regardless of whether it was related to the virus.

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OPINION • Opinion

# California can responsibly navigate the risks of reopening







Nancy Westenhaver, the owner of Nancy May's '50s Cafe in Rancho Cucamonga, got an anonymous delivery of flowers to celebrate her restaurant's reopening Monday. Her diner had been closed since March 16 and she had briefly planned to shut down for good. (Photo by David Allen, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

By **MARC JOFFE** |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 1:48 p.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 1:48 p.m.



As California counties start to loosen their stay-at-home policies and go through the phases of reopening, they should look at the experience of Northern European countries that have been significantly and successfully relaxing restrictions over the last several weeks.

These countries have been able to reopen schools and retail businesses without triggering unmanageable spikes in COVID-19 hospitalizations.

Denmark offers the most striking example. After implementing an early and strict shelter-in-place

order on March 11, before any coronavirus-related deaths in the country, it began a phased relaxation in mid-April. Denmark has now reopened a wide array of facilities including schools, restaurants, shopping malls, and is allowing public gatherings of up to 50 people.

Meanwhile, the total number of Danes hospitalized due to COVID-19 has continued to decline, falling below 200 recently after peaking above 500 in early April – in a nation of 5.8 million people, a bit less than live in the Bay Area.

TOP ARTICLES 1/5



Other nations that have been steadily opening schools and business establishments include Norway, Austria, and the Czech Republic. Among larger European countries, Germany has been relaxing restrictions fastest, even allowing the resumption of professional soccer—without fans in stadiums last month.

Reopening in Northern Europe has not been accompanied by large outbreaks for various reasons.

Denmark is offering coronavirus testing to every citizen. Germany has utilized contact tracing to limit outbreaks. When establishments began their re-openings, they allowed fewer customers and required social distancing and use of face masks. But another possibility is that places like schools and stores, which reopened quickly, were never the primary sources of deadly contagion.

In contrast to California's schools being shut down, Denmark swiftly reopened schools and is holding many classes outside where the coronavirus doesn't spread as easily. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the haphazard, unplanned shift to online learning across California has produced mixed results, with low-income children dealing with the largest access problems and facing the worst learning outcomes.

Among the worst coronavirus outbreaks the US has seen have been in nursing homes, where there is extended physical contact between residents and caregivers, and in meatpacking plants, where workers are close to one another and temperatures are kept artificially low.

Other places that the virus seems to spread include homes, hospitals, buses, and trains – none of which were subject to the state's lockdowns.

Similarly, California's supermarkets, hardware stores, and places like Target and Walmart remained open throughout the lockdowns. In other US states, hair salons, fitness facilities and other businesses opened without major spikes in hospitalizations.

The move to reopen has been fastest in red states, which, unfortunately, helped fan a counterproductive political divide over public health policy. And President Trump, who has pushed a variety of conspiracy theories and recently accused a reporter of trying to be "politically correct" because he left his mask on while asking Trump a question, helped politicize nearly everything surrounding the coronavirus pandemic.

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school children, workers, and small businesses — all of whom are suffering. And that places like Denmark show it is possible to take a balanced approach that substantially reopens the economy without a spike in COVID-19 hospitalizations or deaths.

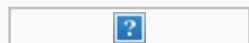
*Marc Joffe is a senior policy analyst at Reason Foundation.*

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In contrast, in Northern European countries the relaxation of lockdowns enjoyed cross-party support. Leaders from across the political spectrum worked together to find ways to balance the imperatives of retaining jobs and businesses, minimizing social isolation, and keeping the virus in check.

It has been weeks since California successfully flattened the coronavirus curve. The goal was never to get cases down to zero, but to ensure hospitals and the health care system weren't overwhelmed.

As the overall number of coronavirus cases continues to grow in the weeks ahead, it is important to note that in addition to public health priorities, the shutdowns and limitations need to be judged on their potential harms to

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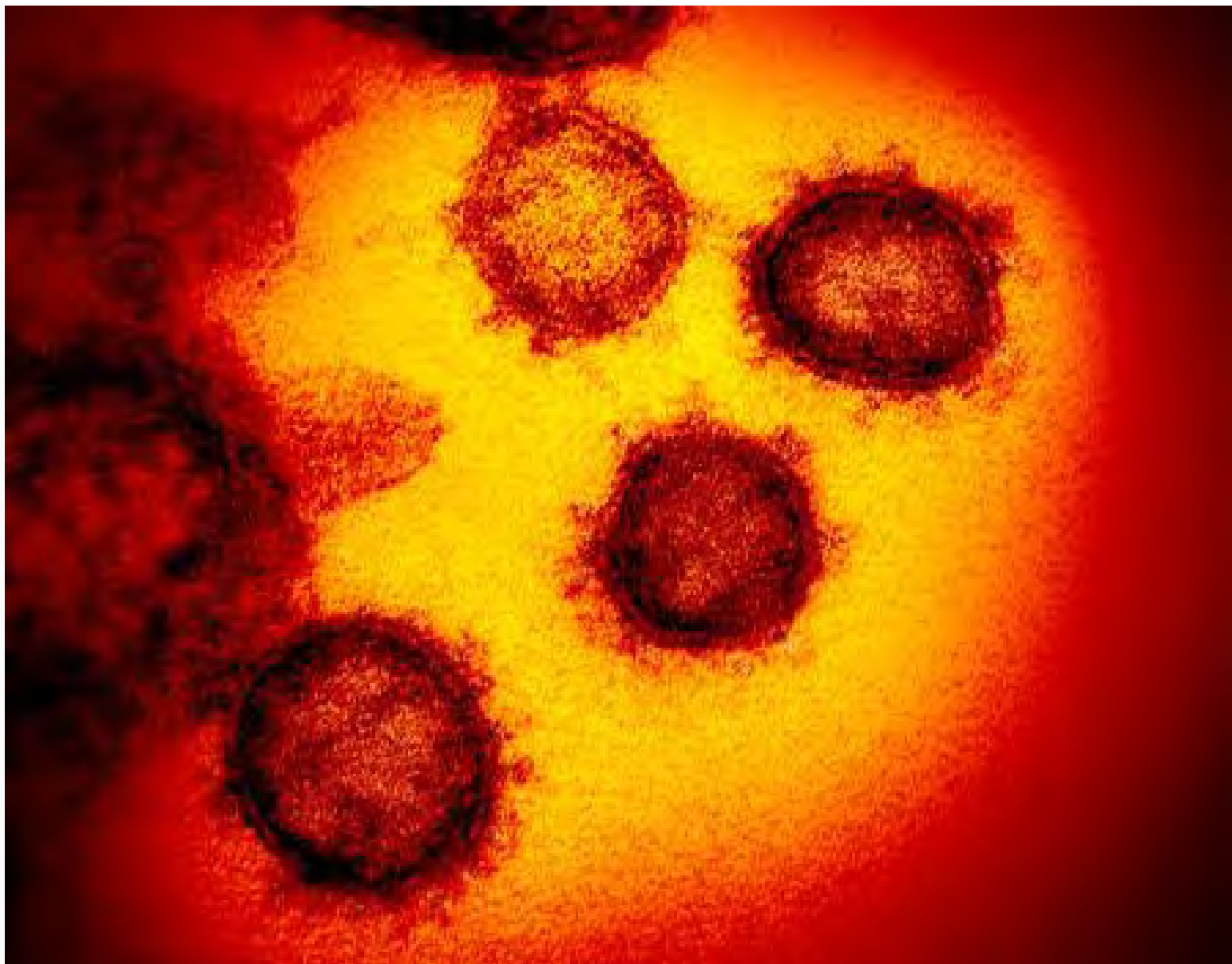


NEWS  CALIFORNIA NEWS • News

# Coronavirus: 8 things we got wrong — at first — about the deadly pandemic

From masks to contagion rates, our understanding of COVID-19 has come a long way





This undated electron microscope image made available by the U.S. National Institutes of Health in February 2020 shows the Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. Also known as 2019-nCoV, the virus causes COVID-19. The sample was isolated from a patient in the U.S. On Tuesday, April 21, 2020, (NIAID-RML via AP)

By **LISA M. KRIEGER** |

PUBLISHED: June 10, 2020 at 8:38 a.m. | UPDATED: June 10, 2020 at 8:39 a.m.



A lot of our early assumptions about the new coronavirus have flip-flopped.

This is normal. That's how science works — it's a process of being less and less wrong over time. COVID-19 is new, so there's lots of uncertainty. And the pandemic's size and scale caught us by surprise. As we learn more, our understanding of the virus continues to change.

Here's what we now know:



## Masks are useful after all.

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Were you dubious about the U.S. Centers for Disease Control's early assertion that mask "leakage" meant that it wouldn't protect you from a virus? Join the crowd.

The CDC has since reversed its position. And an influential study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* — which concluded that masks do not effectively stop virus-laden droplets — was retracted due to statistical problems.

Now we wear them everywhere — indeed, they're often required. While masks don't offer perfect protection, any kind of impediment is better than nothing. And if you're sick, a mask can help keep you from spreading the virus to others.

### **Don't just blame China; our early cases came from all over.**

To be sure, the crisis first emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan. So that's where U.S. authorities focused their attention. In fact, the only way you could get a test was if you had recently traveled there, or had contact with someone known to be infected.



TOKYO, JAPAN – APRIL 08: A statue of a small boy is pictured with a face mask on April 8, 2020 in Tokyo, Japan. Japans Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, yesterday declared a state of emergency that will cover 7 of Japans 47 prefectures, including Tokyo and Osaka, as the Covid-19 coronavirus outbreak continues to spread in the country. The move will allow affected prefectures to take measures including expropriating private land and buildings and requisitioning medical supplies and food from companies that refuse to sell them. Tokyo recorded 144 new infections on Wednesday bringing the total in the capital to 1,339 with 85 deaths nationwide. (Photo by Carl Court/Getty Images)



A new UC San Francisco genetic analysis reveals that California's viral lineages are as diverse as we are. While some early infections can be traced to China, several others arrived here from Europe. Domestic travel was also to blame: Of the 20 first travel-related cases at UCSF, 14 were linked to travel within the U.S., including six from New York.

### **It's less deadly than we first feared.**

Early on, death rates varied widely by geography — but they were all scary, ranging from 2% in South Korea, 4.3% in the U.S. and 13% in Italy. While we assumed the risk would drop as testing expanded and infected people recovered, we didn't have reliable numbers.

With more data emerging, the CDC has revised the estimate downward. The current U.S. death rate for those showing symptoms ranges from 0.2%-1%, with a "best estimate" of 0.4%. That's still much higher than the seasonal flu's 0.1% death rate — but it's better than we feared. Still, until there is a vaccine, we are all vulnerable. And the death rates for some people, such as elders and those with other illnesses, remain extraordinarily high.



The CDC is warning against all nonessential travel to Wuhan, China.(Getty Images)

### **It's also less contagious.**

Initial estimates suggested that each person with the virus could infect between two and four people — a rate that would accelerate an outbreak, if nothing is done to reduce it. A subsequent study from Los Alamos National Laboratory placed it even higher: 5.7!

Experts now calculate that the nation's current transmission rate ranges from .90 to .95. That's great news: A value under 1 signals fewer new cases in an area, whereas a value of over 1 means more cases.

What's changed is our behavior, not the science. And if we let down our guard, it could pop back up again. Already, there are hints that re-opening and relaxed behaviors are contributing to transmission rates over 1.1 in Utah and South Carolina.

### **It's not just a respiratory disease.**

Many early symptoms seemed to involve the lungs. Patients had pneumonia, coughed and couldn't breathe.

Now we know that the virus can attack other parts of the body. In April, the CDC added new symptoms, such as sore throat, muscle aches and fever. Gastrointestinal problems, such as diarrhea and nausea, have also been reported. Some people complain of loss of smell and taste and neurological symptoms, like dizziness. An infection can even cause mysterious and painful lesions on the toes, weeks after acute illness.

And, disturbingly, a growing body of evidence suggests that patients are suffering from strokes as a result of blood clots.



An Australian newspaper has printed an extra eight pages to be used as toilet paper after coronavirus fears prompted customers to bulk buy supplies, leaving some supermarket shelves bare.(WILLIAM WEST/AFP/Getty Images)

**Your mail probably won't kill you.**

Remember wiping down every letter, package and groceries? It made sense, at the time. We were



anxious about lab studies showing the virus could live hours, even days, on surfaces.

Now, with months of experience under our belt, we know that it's close contact with others — often during gatherings of friends, family or co-workers — that is driving the spread of the virus. Experts say the highest risk of infection is in enclosed, crowded and connected environments, such as households, meat-packing plants, prisons, churches and nursing homes.

Your bag of lettuce is not a main driver of the epidemic. Or that letter from Aunt Nancy.

### **Children aren't completely safe.**

In those dark days of the pandemic, there was this silver lining: Not a single California child died. While kids make up 22.5% of the population, they're only 5.7% of COVID-19 cases. And their illnesses are milder.

But the emergence of a rare complication shows that youth are not completely spared. The CDC reports that a serious inflammatory reaction — called “multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children” (MIS-C) — causes rashes, a persistent fever, abdominal pain and diarrhea. There have even been cases of heart failure.

### **You were smart to store toilet paper.**

The panic-stricken rush on toilet paper was one of the most bewildering moments of February and March. We were scolded for being hoarders, accused of fear and greed. After all, COVID-19 isn't a diarrheal disease. How much toilet paper does any one family really need?

Here's what we've come to appreciate: It kept us home. When infections were skyrocketing, we weren't wandering the aisles of CVS or Costco.

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And because we're home, we need more of it. With an estimated three-quarters of the U.S. population under stay-at-home orders, we're not visiting the commode at work, school, restaurants or coffee shops. Toilet paper manufacturer Georgia-Pacific calculates that home usage is up 40%. To last just two weeks, a four-person household would need 17 double rolls.

In a short six months, we've learned a lot about a once-mysterious pathogen and pandemic.

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But much else remains maddeningly unclear — so many of today's certainties will be tomorrow's corrections.

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By Mazda



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Lisa M. Krieger

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Los Angeles Times

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BUSINESS

# 1.5 million more laid-off workers seek unemployment benefits



A pedestrian wearing a mask walks past a reader board advertising a job opening for a remodeling company in Seattle on June 4. (Elaine Thompson / Associated Press)

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

JUNE 11, 2020 | 5:44 AM

WASHINGTON — About 1.5 million laid-off workers applied for U.S. unemployment benefits last week, evidence that many Americans are still losing their jobs even as the economy appears to be slowly recovering with more businesses partially reopening.

The latest figure from the Labor Department marked the 10th straight weekly decline in applications for jobless aid since they peaked in mid-March when the coronavirus hit hard. Still, the pace of layoffs remains historically high.

The total number of people who are receiving unemployment aid fell slightly, a sign that some people who were laid off when restaurants, retail chains and small businesses suddenly shut down have been recalled to work.

Last week's jobs report showed that employers added 2.5 million jobs in May, an unexpected increase that suggested that the job market has bottomed out.

But the recovery has begun slowly. Though the unemployment rate unexpectedly declined from 14.7%, it is still a high 13.3%. And even with the May hiring gain, just one in nine jobs that were lost in March and April have returned. Nearly 21 million people are officially classified as unemployed.

But that doesn't capture the full scope of the damage to the job market. Including those the government said were erroneously categorized as employed in the May jobs report and those who lost jobs but didn't search for new ones, 32.5 million people are out of work, economists estimate.

Thursday's report also shows that an additional 706,000 people applied for jobless benefits last week under a new program for self-employed and gig workers that made them eligible for aid for the first time. These figures aren't adjusted for seasonal variations, so the government doesn't include them in the official count.

In February, the economy fell into a deep recession, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the association of economists that is the official arbiter of recessions. The Federal Reserve estimated Wednesday that the economy will shrink 6.5% this year. That would be, by far, the deepest annual contraction on records dating to World War II.

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By Hewlett Packard Enterprise

John Chambers: An industry pioneer who has led through ups & downs. Register free to join the conversation on June 23.

Even as restaurants, bars and gyms reopen, they are doing so at lower capacity. And consumer spending on such services remains far below what it was before the viral outbreak.

Unemployment benefits are providing significant support for jobless Americans, with total payments having reached \$94 billion in May — six times the previous record set in 2010 just after the previous recession. This time, the benefits include an additional \$600 a week from the federal government.

But that extra benefit is set to end July 31, and the Trump administration opposes extending it. Its opposition has set up a possible clash with House Democrats, who have approved legislation to extend the \$600-a-week in federal benefits for an additional six months.

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U.S.

# Nursing Homes Say Some Protective Gear Sent by FEMA Is Unusable

Complaints include gowns unsuited to health-care settings, gloves too small for adults; government and contractor say all are up to standard



John Hovey, health care administrator at Warm Beach Senior Community in Stanwood, Wash., models a gown from a FEMA shipment.

PHOTO: JOHN HOVEY

By [Anna Wilde Mathews](#)

June 11, 2020 5:30 am ET

A major federal effort to ship protective gear to nursing homes during the coronavirus pandemic is providing equipment that some facilities say is unusable, including plastic gowns that they say don't meet their infection-control requirements.

The shipments, coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, are ultimately supposed to provide two weeks' worth of gloves, gowns, surgical masks and eye protection for each of approximately 15,000 facilities. A FEMA spokeswoman said that as of Tuesday, 13,654 packages have been sent, with more slated for the coming weeks.



A Genesis Healthcare facility in West Virginia received gowns in a Federal Emergency Management Agency shipment that lacked armholes.

PHOTO: GENESIS HEALTHCARE

Nursing homes have said the federal equipment was needed sooner, when many faced a dangerous shortage as the coronavirus swept through. A recent Wall Street Journal tally of state data showed more than 44,000 coronavirus-related deaths of residents and staff in long-term-care facilities, including assisted-living sites. Nursing-home staffers have said in lawsuits and complaints to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration that they were often working with inadequate protection.

The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, which operates 147 nursing homes, said roughly half of its facilities have received federal shipments. But the nonprofit, which is part of Sanford Health, said it wasn't planning to use the gowns, masks or most of the gloves.

“If we were out of everything else, we would go to this stuff,” said Randy Bury, chief executive of the nonprofit. But, he said, some of the materials sent by FEMA posed a risk of failing a regulatory inspection: “If we had some of this stuff in use, and had an infection-control survey, I would be afraid they would cite us for insufficient PPE.” Most of the masks were too small for adults, and the ear loops were too loose, while many gloves were also too small to fit staffers, he said.

Katie Smith Sloan, president of LeadingAge, an association that represents nonprofit providers of aging services, said, “LeadingAge calls on the administration and Congress for immediate access to ample amounts of each category of PPE for all care providers who serve older Americans.”

The FEMA spokeswoman said the federal initiative “supplements existing efforts to ensure nursing homes across the country have PPE during the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Several nursing-home executives said their facilities had received gowns in FEMA shipments that weren’t acceptable in a patient-care setting. “It’s the kind of thing I would use in my garden for tarps,” said Jon Riewer, chief executive of Eventide Senior Living Communities, a nonprofit based in Moorhead, Minn., that owns six nursing homes.



FEMA Administrator Peter Gaynor. The agency is supposed to provide two weeks’ worth of gloves, gowns, surgical masks and eye protection for each of approximately 15,000 nursing homes.

PHOTO: TOM WILLIAMS/ZUMA PRESS

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## MORE ON NURSING HOMES IN THE PANDEMIC

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Noah Marco, chief medical officer of the Los Angeles Jewish Home, a nonprofit that owns four nursing homes, said the blue plastic gowns were likely to increase the risk of infection for the wearer, calling them “embarrassingly unusable.”

The blue gowns were large and not fitted, requiring tape to secure them, nursing-home executives said. To remove them would require ripping, likely exposing the wearer to the virus if the gown had been contaminated, said John Hovey, health-care administrator at Warm Beach Senior Community in Stanwood, Wash., who said the gowns looked like “glorified garbage bags.” He said many of the gloves his facility received from FEMA were also too small for adults.

[Genesis Healthcare Inc.](#), the biggest U.S. operator of nursing homes, said two of its facilities had received gowns from FEMA that lacked hand holes. “We are not aware of other issues other than the reality that a one-week supply is obviously not enough given the complexity of the virus which continues to impact nursing homes,” Richard Feifer, the company’s chief medical officer, said in a statement.

Last week, 136 Senate and House Democrats sent a letter to the Department of Health and Human Services saying nursing homes are in “dire need of additional federal support and guidance,” including personal protective equipment. Trump administration officials have said that they have focused closely on nursing homes, offering significant support and guidance.

Nursing homes continue to report shortages of gear. A Journal analysis of data released last week by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services found that 673 nursing homes said they lacked a current supply of at least one category of personal protective equipment, while 3,138 had less than a one-week supply of at least one type for the week of May 31. The Journal analysis included about 12,000 facilities with data for that week that passed a CMS quality check. The federal survey that produced the CMS data asked about masks, gloves, eye protection, hand sanitizer and gowns.

The FEMA spokeswoman said the gear it is supplying meets requirements of the federal Food and Drug Administration or the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation,

a nonprofit. But “due to concerns from those who received them, the contractor is working on a short instructional video” about proper use of the gowns, she said.

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The contractor, Federal Resources Supply Co., said it was procuring and distributing the equipment under a contract with the Defense Logistics Agency. The company said it shipped a mix of glove sizes and used only approved sources. The blue plastic gowns exceed the standard required by the contract, the company said. Federal Resources said several nursing homes had thanked it for the equipment, and its customer-service department worked with any facilities that raised concerns.

A spokesman for the Defense Logistics Agency said the contract was worth \$143 million, and that its personnel have visited the Federal Resources facility “to ensure adequate materiel and staff was on hand for the requirement.”

Nursing-home operators said they had sometimes been confused as shipments of protective gear showed up, apparently from the government, with the exact source not always clear. Several said they had gotten boxes of cotton masks which they assumed were from FEMA, though they said such masks wouldn’t protect staffers.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services said that it was sending cloth masks to nursing homes and other sites, but they weren’t intended for health-care workers. The masks are “part of a multiprong approach to reopen American economic activity while continuing to limit spread of Covid-19.”

**Write to Anna Wilde Mathews at [anna.mathews@wsj.com](mailto:anna.mathews@wsj.com)**

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CALIFORNIA

# A coronavirus vaccine in 2020? Maybe. Here's what has to go right

More than 130 labs around the world are working to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. But what would it take to vaccinate everyone by early next year?

By [JOEL RUBIN](#) | STAFF WRITER

JUNE 11, 2020 | 5 AM

When President Trump announced last month that a vaccine against the new coronavirus could be available by [the end of the year](#) or sooner, his claim was met with a mix of hope and doubt.

The search for vaccines often ends in failure, and the successful efforts have always taken years. So it seemed improbable, if not impossible, that researchers, who began working on vaccines for the new virus in January, could discover something so elusive and do it so quickly.

But then scientists at Moderna, a pharmaceutical company, announced they had made promising early progress and claimed they could potentially have a proven vaccine by winter.

So, could a vaccine in 2020 really be in the cards?

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Possibly, said Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, and others involved in a program the U.S. government has set up to expedite vaccines that protect people from becoming infected by the virus.

Fauci and others believe they have created a doable, albeit hugely expensive, blueprint for how vaccines could be safely tested and manufactured in a matter of months. Under the plan, dubbed [Operation Warp Speed](#) by the president, the federal government has invested heavily in several vaccine efforts while also rolling out a massive testing program.

What the plan cannot address is the question that matters the most: Will any of the

vaccines being tested actually work?

"All of this is unprecedented," Fauci said in an interview. "When people say, 'Having a vaccine by the winter, that's impossible.' It's not impossible.... If the Fates have it that we have an effective vaccine and there are no glitches that are unanticipated, it is possible that we will have one in the middle of the winter. There's no guarantee, though."

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## Quick out of the gate

The quick jump that some researchers were able to make into working on vaccines shaved many months, if not more, off the typical timeline, Fauci and others said.

In January, within days of Chinese officials releasing the genetic code of the coronavirus, a team of researchers from Moderna and the National Institutes of Health had [devised a possible vaccine](#) based on a part of the virus' genetic machinery called mRNA.

Moderna had been working for years on the technique, which has never been used to make a human vaccine, and was able to quickly apply it to the new virus. Just two months later, the first participants in a study of the vaccine were injected with it — a turnaround time that would have been inconceivable before the coronavirus.

### BUSINESS

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May 28, 2020

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Scientists at Oxford University, as well as groups in China and elsewhere, also were able to get out of the gate quickly to begin tests on various types of vaccines. As of last week, 10 teams had moved beyond laboratory work to begin testing their vaccines on humans, and



more than 120 others are in earlier stages of development, according to the [World Health Organization](#).

Human trials are arduous undertakings that typically play out over several years as researchers recruit thousands of volunteers in different age groups who meet strict criteria to be injected with the potential vaccine.

Early phases of testing are meant to assess a potential vaccine's safety. In later phases, researchers compare the rate at which vaccinated volunteers contract the virus against a group given a placebo, or dummy vaccine, to determine how much protection, if any, different doses of the vaccine provide. The process is designed to be slow and deliberate.

But with the world desperate for a vaccine or vaccines to bring the coronavirus to heel, the U.S. has looked to accelerate dramatically the discovery, manufacturing and distribution of vaccines and medicines to treat the virus that has killed more than 112,000 Americans.

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Leaders of several nations last month [pledged \\$8 billion](#) for a similar effort to support promising vaccines around the world.

## Five promising vaccines

Under the U.S. program, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has so far [announced plans](#) to spend more than \$2 billion to spur the development and manufacturing of at least five vaccines considered to be promising — those from Moderna; Oxford, which has partnered with pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca; as well as Janssen, which is a part of Johnson & Johnson; Sanofi; and Merck.

The largest infusion is going to AstraZeneca, which agreed to provide the U.S. government with 300 million doses of the Oxford vaccine in exchange for up to \$1.2 billion in funding, "with the first doses delivered [as early as October 2020](#)," according to the Health and Human Services Department.

All of the vaccines in the U.S. program, as well as others under development, take aim at a spike-shaped protein on the virus that plays a role in infecting people.

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Using an array of scientific techniques, the vaccines will try to relay to the immune system

the information needed to recognize the protein as a threat and then respond with antibodies capable of neutralizing the protein. The nascent vaccines are appealing, in part, because each one of them could be produced at massive scale far more quickly than traditional types of vaccines.

The Oxford-AstraZeneca effort, which is also receiving funding from the British government, is made from a virus that causes common cold infections in chimpanzees and has been genetically altered to target the coronavirus.

Early tests show the vaccine may have stopped the virus from causing pneumonia in several monkeys, but it did not prevent the virus from taking hold in the animals' noses. Results have not been released from its early tests on humans.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine takes the same approach as Oxford's but won't be tested on humans until September, according to the company. Sanofi also has yet to begin human tests on its vaccine, which embeds the genetic code for the spike protein into the DNA of another innocuous virus.

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Beyond investing in the vaccines, the U.S program will also oversee a plan to streamline and coordinate the testing of vaccines. The five potential vaccines will be evaluated using the same measurements to make comparisons easier, and a single, independent monitoring board will decide if any of vaccines have been proved to work.

Researchers will have access to at least 72 testing sites that have been identified across the country and an equal number in other countries, said [Dr. Larry Corey](#), an expert in vaccine development at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center who is helping to orchestrate the government program.

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The plan relies heavily on testing networks that have been built over the years for work on vaccines against HIV and other pathogens, according to

Comic: How the Los Angeles hills keep me

Corey and Fauci. Testing sites are often based at university medical centers.

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Moderna researchers have said they expect to begin the third, and final, phase of testing in July, which would give them six months to determine whether a vaccine is effective before the new year. The Oxford-AstraZeneca team is on a similar timeline.

Six months could be enough time under the framework the government has set up, Fauci and Corey said. Corey says, however, he believes it would be more realistic to start the clock once all the participants in the Moderna study have been enrolled instead of at the start, which would push the timeline into early next year.

## **Needed: Huge volunteer pool**

If researchers can recruit a sufficiently large pool of participants in areas where the virus is infecting high numbers of people, less time probably will be needed to know if a vaccine works.

Doing so can be a challenge, especially when dealing with a new virus that is poorly understood. Where the virus will be most active when a vaccine is ready for large-scale testing, for example, is "a moving target," Corey said.

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"We have a virus that is sweeping through different areas," Corey said. "How do we match our clinical trial sites with where the viral activity is?"

The large network of sites the government has set up is meant to guard against researchers losing time chasing the virus around the country and overseas. Sites will be pressed into service and shut down as needed. And, in the end, many sites the government pays to set up will probably go unused, Corey and Fauci said.

"We are putting a lot of money to get the sites ready ... before we even know, for

example, whether a particular vaccine candidate is safe," Fauci said. "If we discover from [preliminary testing] that, God forbid, that it's not safe, then we'll have invested a lot of money getting a lot of sites ready to do something that we're not going to do.... The risk is the money, not the safety, not the integrity of the trial."

Similarly, it is unknown whether the hot summer months in the United States [could significantly suppress the virus](#), leaving researchers with too few options for testing whether a vaccine works.

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If that happens, Corey said, researchers will probably have to turn their focus to sites in African countries, Brazil and other places that may be experiencing outbreaks. The participation of 25,000 to 30,000 people will be needed in the final stage of tests for each of the five vaccines, Corey said.

"A virus that we've never seen before is unpredictable," he said. "We have to anticipate all options."

How many doses of a vaccine could be made by the end of the year is an open question. Pharmaceutical companies have announced partnerships with manufacturing companies as well as plans to begin mass-manufacturing their vaccines before it is known if they work.

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When the operations are up and running, tens of millions of doses of a vaccine could be produced each month, but getting the specialized equipment, staff and materials needed to produce the vaccines takes time.

Albert Baehny, chief executive of Lonza, which will manufacture the central component of Moderna's vaccine, for example, said its U.S. facility would be able to make more than 8

million doses of the vaccine's so-called active ingredients each month, but wouldn't be ready to begin production until October.

The company's facilities in Switzerland, which will produce about 25 million doses each month, are expected to start in December, Baehny said. And after Lonza completes its work, more time will be needed for another company to complete the last steps of the manufacturing process.

## All about the data

All the logistical planning, however, will amount to nothing if none of the vaccines being supported by the U.S. program are effective at protecting people from the coronavirus. The time it will take to determine if a vaccine works is pegged to the vaccine itself, experts said.

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Moderna announced in May that early tests on a handful of study participants found the vaccine had triggered an immune response that researchers believed could be effective at preventing the virus from infecting people. But it will be up to an independent board of outside experts to decide if that is actually the case for Moderna, AstraZeneca and, later, the other vaccines being tested in the government program.

To do so, statisticians on the board will perform complex calculations based on the data collected in the large trials to determine whether a vaccine has had a genuine effect that cannot have been due to chance and to estimate the specific level of protection it provides.

If a vaccine is, in fact, very effective, those results will become clear quickly because the difference between people who are vaccinated and those who receive the placebo will be stark.

In that case, the monitoring board could declare the vaccine a success, clearing the way for it to be put into use. The board probably would need longer to reach a decision about a lower-performing vaccine since it would take time to collect sufficient data to establish its effectiveness.

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"None of us have a crystal ball to know where all these efforts will be on Dec. 31," said Dr.

Bali Pulendran, a Stanford immunologist. "I'm cautiously optimistic, but if there is one thing I've learned about the immune system, it is that we have to be humble."

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CALIFORNIA

# Plan to restore affirmative action in California clears hurdle after emotional debate



A proposed ballot measure by Assemblywoman Shirley Weber (D-San Diego) to repeal California's 1996 ban on affirmative action, was approved by the state Assembly on Wednesday. (Rich Pedroncelli / Associated Press)

By [JOHN MYERS](#) | SACRAMENTO BUREAU CHIEF

JUNE 10, 2020 | 5:59 PM

SACRAMENTO — California voters would be asked to erase the state's 24-year ban on affirmative action in November under a proposal approved Wednesday by the state Assembly, with supporters arguing their effort is more important than ever amid nationwide protests for racial equality and justice.

The plan would strike from California's Constitution the rules imposed by Proposition 209, which prohibits government agencies and institutions from giving preferential treatment to individuals on the basis of race or sex. The ballot measure sparked a fierce political and cultural debate in 1996, much of which focused on the impact of the era's affirmative action policies for admission to the state's colleges and universities.

Although subsequent legal challenges left Proposition 209 on the books, opponents have argued the law has preserved and deepened the inequities in education and government contracting opportunities for a generation of Black and Latino Californians — a reality the



bill's supporters said has never been more clear.

"The ongoing pandemic, as well as recent tragedies of police violence, is forcing Californians to acknowledge the deep-seated inequality and far-reaching institutional failures that show that your race and gender still matter," said Assemblywoman Shirley Weber (D-San Diego), the author of the bill, Assembly Constitutional Amendment 5.

ACA 5 now moves to the state Senate, where it must be ratified by June 25 in order to be placed on the Nov. 3 statewide ballot.

The lengthy discussion of the proposed ballot measure included only two dissenting voices, both Republican lawmakers.

Irvine Republican Assemblyman Steven Choi said that "giving special or preferential treatment to someone based on their race is racism itself, or on their sex is sexism."

Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) argued ACA 5 would not end racial discrimination in California's education system, insisting that ineffective teachers in low-income communities are kept there by tenure rules that are demanded by teachers unions.

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"You can talk about admissions and using, bringing back affirmative action, but what are we doing to ensure that Black and brown students graduate and get that education?" Gallagher said. "That's a conversation that we need to be having. We need to go even deeper."

But more than two dozen Assembly members who spoke during Wednesday's debate said the 1996 law is antiquated, as is its promise to voters in the 1996 campaign to help create a "colorblind" society.

"Systematic racism didn't stop because of [Prop.] 209," said Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego), who noted she had benefited from affirmative action as a law student in the '90s. "And so what we've seen over these generations is the missed opportunity of so many kids in our communities who haven't had the benefit that we all had."

The overwhelming support for asking voters to reconsider affirmative action stood in stark

contrast to 2014, when a similar effort in the state Capitol to send the issue of affirmative action back to voters roiled the Legislature. Several lawmakers at the time abandoned the effort after advocacy groups warned that reinstatement of affirmative action would limit college admissions for Asian American students.

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But those old wounds resurfaced late in the debate Wednesday that lasted more than two hours. Assemblyman Evan Low (D-Campbell) said that far more constituents calling his office asked him to vote against ACA 5 than those asking him to support it. He said Chinese Americans, in particular, “believe that if you do the hard work as you’re told, they will have their chance too.”

Others said the topic wasn’t so clear in the Asian American community.

#### BUSINESS

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June 5, 2020

“Some of the opposition want you to believe that Asian Americans unilaterally oppose affirmative action,” Assemblyman David Chiu (D-San Francisco) said during Wednesday’s debate. “That is simply not true. ... I hear all the time that my Asian American constituents want more teachers who look like us, more principals, university presidents, more first responders, firefighters, bilingual police officers. Current law prevents that.”

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In 2017, the issue surfaced again when caucuses representing Asian American legislators asked candidates for governor, including Gov. Gavin Newsom, [to weigh in on whether race should be used in college and university admissions](#). Newsom and his Democratic challengers voiced support for affirmative action; the Republican candidates didn’t respond to the question.

Few topics have been more consistently debated in California, where a clash over UC Davis’ affirmative action policy resulted in [a landmark 1978 ruling](#) by the U.S. Supreme Court upholding it. By 1995, [conservative activists believed the state’s electorate would](#)

[overturn such policies](#) and drafted a ballot measure to enshrine a ban in the state Constitution.

Proposition 209 barred any attempt to “grant preferential treatment” based on gender or race and passed on Nov. 5, 1996, with support from 55% of voters. Numerous studies have since dissected its impact, and opponents have stood firm that the constitutional amendment has done nothing to limit racial, gender and economic discrimination.

Weber, a Democratic lawmaker who has championed a number of bills she believes would root out systemic inequality, has argued that California was making consistent progress in the early 1990s in helping nonwhite entrepreneurs and businesses owned by women — an upward trajectory, she said, that came to an end with the passage of Proposition 209.

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“Removing [Prop.] 209 will not solve all of the problems,” she said on Wednesday. “But it’s one of the many tools that we have to have in California, to say California is the land of great opportunity.”

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John Myers joined the Los Angeles Times as Sacramento bureau chief in 2015 and has spent more than two decades covering California politics, state government and elections.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT



# Short term savings can yield long-term problems: Why code enforcement is vital to municipal fiscal wellness

Over the past several months, local governments have incurred significant unplanned expenses due to the unprecedented, multi-faceted response required by not only COVID-19, but also civil unrest. At the same time, the League of California Cities estimates that municipalities across California are facing a \$7 billion revenue shortfall over the next two years due to the impact of stay-at-home orders on business and tourism. As a result, the League reports that nine out of 10 California cities are considering cutting or furloughing city staff.



the unprecedented, multi-faceted response required by not only COVID-19, but also civil unrest. At the same time, the League of California Cities estimates that

Last week, in California City, the City Council chose to leave vacant two code enforcement officer positions and, for all practical purposes, suspend code enforcement in the community.

Because law enforcement represents such a substantial general fund expense for many municipalities, it is an easy target when administrators are looking to cut back. Code enforcement personnel and nuisance abatement in general were on the chopping block during the great recession in the early 2000s.

However, by reducing code enforcement during a budget crisis, agencies can expose themselves to increased and long-term economic harm, according to Matthew Silver, Partner at [Silver & Wright LLP](#).

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“Code enforcement often is the first line item to be reduced or eliminated during a fiscal crisis,” says Silver. “This is a grave mistake, because code enforcement is central to the physical health and the financial health of cities, both in the present and in the future.”

Effective code enforcement not only combats blight, impacting property values and community identity, but also supports and enhances quality of life by maintaining and cultivating a clean, safe environment and healthy living and working conditions.

Cities should invest in code enforcement first and foremost, says Silver, because protecting communities is a fundamental role of public agencies: “There’s a moral as well as a legal obligation for cities and counties to provide for the health and safety of their residents,” he says.

Code enforcement officers play an important role in maintaining and improving a community’s well-being by responding to resident concerns and addressing complaints before they fester into bigger problems. The broken windows theory suggests that visible signs of crime and disorder create an environment that encourages further, escalating crime and disorder, not to mention blighted neighborhoods. By addressing gateway maintenance issues such as broken windows, poor lawn maintenance, or graffiti, code enforcement officers help to create an atmosphere of order and lawfulness, thereby preventing more dangerous problems. Amid a financial crisis, municipal and county code enforcement officers play a particularly essential role in addressing violations, as foreclosed and vacant properties become prevalent, and housing conditions likely deteriorate.

“According to the theory, one property with a ‘broken window’ may lead to another property with a ‘broken window’ and it deteriorates from there,” says Silver. “Before long, more properties in the neighborhood deteriorate, housing conditions worsen, property values drop, as well as property taxes, and, then, the community’s general fund. A reduction in the general fund affects resources like schools, parks, community aid, and services, including law enforcement and code enforcement. It’s a vicious cycle.”

As front-line responders, code enforcement officers often represent residents’ first interaction with their local government. Their face-to-face engagement can reassure residents that their voices are being heard and their concerns are being addressed. Moreover, code enforcement officers have the capacity to identify and support at-risk members of the community, such as seniors, children, and people who are disabled.

“I would like to think that the government is there to protect vulnerable populations who live in conditions that need to be addressed by their communities, and these conditions are likely to worsen during a recession,” says Silver. “Code enforcement deals with that, pure and simple.

“When there is uncertainty in the world,” he continues, “it becomes even more vital for cities to make their residents feel safe and cared for, and to ensure healthy and dignified housing.”

When funding is limited, code enforcement officers can connect their communities with volunteer groups as well as advocates, such as Habitat for Humanity, and financial assistance, such as grants or low-interest loans, to support monitoring and enforcing local rules and regulations and to address dilapidated and unsafe properties.

“Code enforcement is geared toward compliance,” says Silver. “If a resident wants to comply, code enforcement officers often can allocate resources and provide help for them to do so. For example, a city may pay for a dumpster into which the resident can dump their trash and debris or encourage a church group or volunteer group to assist.”

“I know that many cities have to make tough budget decisions,” says Silver, “but maintaining the code enforcement budget will actually protect the community, physically and fiscally, in the short and long term. Code enforcement will not only help protect the health and safety of the community, it will also help protect the property values that underpin a city’s ability to provide other important services to the community.”

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