

Government Relations

October 07: Ballots Are Here! Census Deadline Extended

Vote by Mail Ballots have started arriving all across the State of California. If you already received your ballot make sure that you fill it out, sign it and mail it as soon as you can. No postage is necessary as it is already pre-paid. Ballot Drop Boxes are also available in both Los Angeles and Orange County for you to deposit your ballot safely.

We're also excited to confirm that the Ballot Drop Box at our Santa Ana Main clinic is officially opened. If you or any of your patients live in Orange County you can always drop it off there. Remember to stay safe and vote early.

Finally, the Census deadline has been extended to October 31st to make sure the Census Bureau receives an accurate and precise response to the Census. Please make sure that your patients, family and friends complete the Census questionnaire. Since we don't know if this deadline might be moved again, the sooner you complete the Census the more funding our communities will receive for important programs they rely on for the next ten years.

You can complete the Census now at www.my2020census.gov

Vote early and Vote Safe

Federal

On the next COVID relief bill, negotiations have stopped for White House officials and senior congressional Democrats on the fifth financial relief package to help counter the negative economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic due to the President's direction to focus on confirming the Supreme Court Nomination and to take up this effort after the election. Trump's surprising announcement stood in stark contrast with recommendations from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome H. Powell, who had said in a speech hours earlier that more economic stimulus was needed to sustain the recovery. More info [here](#).

More info [here](#).

Fed chair warns of economic tragedy if America can't control the coronavirus

The recovery is far from complete, and the US economy remains of danger of shifting into reverse once again. One major risk factor: A rise in Covid-19 infections, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Tuesday at the National Association for Business Economics annual meeting. A second wave of coronavirus could "more significantly limit economic activity, not to mention the tragic effects on lives

and well-being," Powell said. "Managing this risk as the expansion continues will require following medical experts' guidance, including using masks and social-distancing measures."

[The Washington Post: Joint Chiefs Officers In Isolation After Coast Guard Admiral Tests Positive For Coronavirus, Pentagon Says](#)

The White House's handling of an event for the family members of deceased U.S. troops was thrust into a new light on Tuesday amid the disclosure that a Coast Guard admiral who attended has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, forcing some of the military's top generals and admirals into quarantine. The Sept. 27 ceremony, held on Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day with dozens of people in attendance, recognized the families of 20 deceased service members, according to a copy of the event program obtained by The Washington Post

[Live updates: White House approves FDA coronavirus vaccine standards it tried to derail](#)

The White House on Tuesday approved tough new standards for coronavirus vaccines after weeks of delay, but only after the Food and Drug Administration unilaterally published the guidelines on its own website as part of its briefing materials for outside vaccine advisers. The standards, which would be used for an emergency authorization of a vaccine, are the same as the ones the agency proposed weeks ago as part of an effort to boost public confidence in an eventual vaccine. In many cases, they are close to the standards for a full approval. But the White House, worried the criteria would delay authorization of a vaccine, presumably beyond the Nov. 3 election, sat on the guidance.

[FDA asking COVID-19 vaccine developers for two months of safety data, raising doubts about approval by Election Day](#)

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) wants coronavirus vaccine developers to submit two months of safety data before applying for emergency approval, circumventing the White House, which has expressed concerns about the stringent requirements. The FDA, in documents posted online Tuesday, advised drugmakers conducting COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials to monitor patients for at least two months to assess potential negative effects from their candidates.

[CDC Updates Guidance Acknowledging Coronavirus Spreads Via Airborne Transmission](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now says the coronavirus can be spread through airborne particles that can linger in the air "for minutes or even hours" — even among people who are more than 6 feet apart. The CDC still says that SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is most frequently spread among people in close contact with one another, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. But in new guidance published Monday on its website, the agency also acknowledged that under certain circumstances, people have become infected by smaller particles that can linger in the air in enclosed spaces that are poorly ventilated.

COVID-19 Virus Survives On Skin, Hand Hygiene Highly Effective, Study Finds

SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, survives on human skin for 9 hours, much longer than a strain of influenza A virus (IAV). A study in Clinical Infectious Disease indicates that the long survival time on human skin may increase the contact-transmission risk of SARS-CoV-2 compared to other viruses, but finds hand hygiene is highly effective at neutralizing the virus. Contact transmission is considered a significant risk factor in the spread of COVID-19, highlighting the critical need for information about survival of the virus on skin. Previous studies have identified higher stability for coronaviruses compared with other enveloped viruses—those bearing a protective, fatty outer wrapping—like IAV.

State

- Current County Tier Status
 - Purple: 18 Counties – LA County
 - Red: 22 Counties – Orange County
 - Orange: 15 Counties
 - Yellow: 3 Counties

To Tackle Racial Disparities In COVID-19, California Enacts New Metric For Reopening

There are many things still unknown about the coronavirus. But one thing is certain: the disproportionate harm COVID-19 has caused in communities of color. To address the issue, California has implemented a new health equity requirement on the state's 35 largest counties — those with a population of more than 106,000. It's believed to be the first such measure in the U.S. In order to advance to the next phase of economic reopening, counties like Los Angeles will need to reduce the levels of the virus in their most vulnerable communities — by meeting certain test-positivity goals as well as showing targeted investments in resources such as more increased testing, contact tracing and education.

Local

Los Angeles County

- Beginning Monday, October 5, schools can apply for a waiver to reopen their classrooms for in-person instruction for students in grades TK through 2.
- To apply, schools must complete an online application available at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov.
 - The application must be accompanied by letters of support from employees and parents.

- In addition to the application and letters of support, schools must also submit a completed Public Health K-12 Protocol Checklist to demonstrate that they are in compliance with all required infection control protocols.
- The program prioritizes the issuance of waivers to schools with higher percentages of students qualified for free/reduced meals and is capped at 30 schools per week.
- The timeline for the re-opening of additional sectors are the following:
 - As of October 1, **nail salons** resumed indoor services at 25% capacity. Outdoor services should continue as much as possible.
 - As of today, October 5, **cardrooms** can reopen for outdoor operations only. Food and beverages may not be served at the tables. Face coverings are required.
 - On October 7, **indoor shopping malls** will be allowed to reopen with occupancy limited to 25% capacity; all food courts and all common areas remain closed.
 - **Outside playgrounds** can reopen at the discretion of cities and L.A. County Parks and Recreation. Face coverings and physical distancing are required.

Orange County

Orange County will end coronavirus program that has found housing for several hundred homeless people

Starting Oct. 16, Orange County will wind down its participation in Project Roomkey, a state program that locally is providing safer living quarters to about 600 homeless people deemed vulnerable to coronavirus. People helped by the program will not be pushed to the streets. Instead, county officials say they are conducting housing assessments and will offer assistance in finding other shelter or housing options for people who must leave the six Roomkey sites over the next few weeks.

Infection Prevention Medical Director

- With the announcement from the CDC that there is likely COVID transmission through aerosols there was a question in regards to what AltaMed is doing to protect everyone from the pandemic. There are patients who may be asymptomatic and not realize that they have been exposed to COVID. There is a risk assessment on the CDC website to identify the risk of exposure. When taking care of any of our patients, the staff members tending to these patients should be wearing a face mask, face shield, gloves, and should practice regular hand hygiene. The patients should be wearing their masks at all times. As long as you are practicing these guidelines you are in safe environment.
- OSHA recommends N95 masks for presumed or infected patients. We have provided N95 masks for all staff to wear should there be a risk of infection. The patient is then taken to a reverse air flow isolation room, or a room with a HEPA filter. If these rooms are at capacity, the patient can

be placed in a regular exam room; the exam room needs to stay vacant for an hour after the patient has left so that the air can disperse properly. Please be sure to social distance and practice hand hygiene before and after eating, touching your face, going to the restroom. Please stay 6 feet or more away from any individuals and when asking questions, only come close to the patient when needed – taking vital signs or evaluating the patient.

- All staff have access to cleaning supplies – if staff feel that surfaces may be contaminated, they should take it upon themselves to wipe down the surfaces using gloves.

Human Resources

- As a reminder, if you would like to get a flu shot, you can email the Employee Health Department at flucampaign@altamed.org to schedule an appointment. In addition to protecting yourself and others, you can earn Vitality Points and be entered into a drawing for prizes. The goal last year was 90% vaccination rate. Let's attain or exceed this year. Our flu events were also a reminder to complete the census and register to vote, so please remember those important actions as well.

- Webcast: "Women and Breast Cancer, the Power of Prevention"

Learn more about the controllable risk factors for breast cancer and what steps you can take to improve your health and wellbeing. It's a cliché, but it's true: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Join this Health FYI webinar on October 15th from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00

To join, click the "Resources" tab in Vitality. Then, click "Health Resources" and select "Health FYI Webcast." Participants will receive 50 LiveWell points through Vitality.