



COVID-19

California: State of Preparedness

3/9/20

New information in blue.

California is Prepared:

- Given our connectedness to rest of the world and our sheer size, we have always understood that a fast-spreading and novel infectious disease could show up here first, in California, before anywhere else in the country.
- In recent years we have had a plan for a flu-like pandemic – one that has built on our knowledge and experience with previous flu-strains and infectious diseases.
- Our public health infrastructure and our expertise is second to none. We have been preparing for this particular virus since it was discovered last year, and we have been in deep and daily coordination with the CDC, local government and our health system as it spread.
- We're perhaps the most prepared state in the country for tackling this threat. That is why the federal government chose California as the destination for six repatriation flights of U.S. Citizens from China and the Diamond Princess cruise ships.

COVID-19 Numbers at a Glance:

- As of the morning of [March 9, 2020](#), there were a total of [133](#) positive cases¹ in California: 24 cases are from repatriation flights, and the other [109](#) confirmed cases include:
 - [44](#) - travel related;
 - [28](#) - person-to-person
 - [19](#) - community transmissions
 - [18](#) – currently under investigation
 - 1 – death

¹ Counties with confirmed cases include: Alameda, Butte, Imperial, Los Angeles, Mendocino, Marin, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Sacramento, San Benito, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Yolo



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- As of March 9, 2020, there have been 19 deaths reported in the United States from COVID-19; cases reported in 35 states, including D.C.
 - 10,320+ individuals who traveled on commercial flights through SFO or LAX are self-monitoring across 49 local health jurisdictions. This is precautionary and these individuals are not displaying symptoms at this time.
 - 15 – labs with test kits
- Grand Princess – 22 positive cases
- From the international data we have, of those who have tested positive for COVID-19, approximately 80 percent do not exhibit symptoms that would require hospitalization.

Actions Taken by the State and Federal Government

- Around noon on March 9, the Grand Princess cruise ship docked in the Port of Oakland and begin the disembarking process. Federal support teams from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness & Response within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (U.S. HHS) setup disembarking screening protocols to focus first on helping those individuals who required immediate emergency medical care, not necessarily related to COVID-19 exposure.
- Once the first cohort of individuals disembarked, the federal staff began disembarking the 962 California residents and Canadian nationals.
- Disembarkation of California residents will continue on March 10. Once all California residents are off the ship, non-Californians will disembark and be transported by the federal government to facilities in other states. The crew will be quarantined aboard the ship. If a crew member is in need of more acute medical care, he/she will be transferred to an appropriate medical facility in California.
- For more information regarding today's activities in Oakland, see [this press release from OESNews](#).



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- March 8, Cal OES and CDPH issued a press release giving an overview of the plan for the disembarking of the Grand Princess passengers and crew. For that release, please visit the [OES News page](#).
 - U.S. HHS also issued plan guidance stating that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will work with state and local partners in California to support passengers returning to the U.S. on the Grand Princess cruise ship. For that release, please visit the [HHS page](#).
 - The ship will dock temporarily in a non-passenger port in San Francisco Bay.
 - Passengers will be transferred to federal military installations for medical screening, COVID-19 testing, and a 14-day quarantine.
 - Nearly 1,000 passengers who are California residents will complete the mandatory quarantine at Travis Air Force Base and Miramar Naval Air Station, and residents of other states will complete the mandatory quarantine at Joint Base San Antonio Lackland in Texas or Dobbins Air Force Base in Georgia.
 - Throughout the quarantine, passengers will be monitored for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - The Department of State is working closely with the home countries of several hundred passengers to arrange for repatriation to their countries.
- March 7, California officials issued updated guidance to schools, colleges and universities, event organizers and public health officials as they plan for further spread of COVID-19.
- On the morning of March 6, the federal government and the State of California learned that 21 of the 46 individuals who were tested for COVID-19 on the Grand Princess cruise ship tested positive.
 - Federal and state government have been working in close collaboration overnight and throughout the day to quickly stand up a solution that meets the health needs for those on board and protects public health.



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- President Trump and Governor Newsom spoke very early this morning, as did Governor Newsom and Vice President Pence throughout the day.
- The ship remains in international waters, and the mission will be a joint effort by the federal government and the State of California.
- On March 5, under the direction of Governor Gavin Newsom, the Department of Managed Health Care directed all commercial and Medi-Cal health plans regulated by the Department to immediately reduce cost-sharing to zero for all medically necessary screening and testing for the COVID-19.
- On March 5, the California Department of Insurance issued similar direction providing cost free medically necessary testing for an additional 2 million Californians. Combined these announcements ensure that 24 million more Californians are eligible to receive testing, should their health care provider deem it medically necessary.
- On March 5, the California Employee Development Department announced support services to individuals affected by COVID-19 in California. For faster and more convenient access to those services, the use of online options is encouraged.
 - Individuals who are unable to work due to having or being exposed to COVID-19 (certified by a medical professional) can file a Disability Insurance claim.
 - Californians who are unable to work because they are caring for an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19 (certified by a medical professional) can file a Paid Family Leave claim.
 - Employers experiencing a slowdown in their businesses or services as a result of the Coronavirus impact on the economy may apply for the UI Work Sharing Program.
- On March 4, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency.



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- The order streamlines processes to allow California to more rapidly address the impacts of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases throughout the state. These measures include:
 - Waiving unnecessary contracting requirements for state agencies;
 - Facilitates the use of out-of-state resources to provide assistance in California;
 - Extends price gouging protections for emergency and medical supplies statewide, including, but not limited to, antibacterial products, hygiene products, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and personal protective equipment;
 - Ensures the availability of all state properties as well as state and local fairgrounds;
 - Facilitates the sharing of anonymized information to facilitate monitoring, investigation and control, and treatment and coordination of care;
 - Ensures appropriate dissemination of COVID-19 guidance;
 - Relaxes regulations governing licensing and use of facilities under the purview of CDPH;
 - Relaxes regulations governing licensing and use of facilities under the purview of the Department of Social Services;
 - Allows for the transportation of patients to facilities as necessary to address the impacts of COVID-19;
 - Suspends requirements for local governments to periodically renew local emergencies and local health emergencies; and
 - May provide for the assistance to local governments that have demonstrated extraordinary or disproportionate impacts.



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- On March 3, CDPH announced that it has received approval from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to use some of its emergency planning reserves of 21 million N95 filtering facepiece masks in certain situations.
 - The emergency planning reserves of N95 masks, some of which are past their manufacturer use-by date, have been stored in climate-controlled conditions that preserved the masks' efficacy. The way the masks have been stored will prevent the degradation of elastic that slips around the ears, a key factor in the CDC and NIOSH's approval.
 - These masks are approved for use only in limited, low-risk circumstances, thus relieving pressure on the supply chain of unexpired masks for health care providers caring for confirmed COVID-19 patients and other high-risk situations for infectious diseases. On March 2, Governor Gavin Newsom requested the Legislature make up to \$20 million available for state government to respond to the spread of COVID-19. This will be an early action item for the 2020-2021 budget. (CORRECTED)
- On March 2, Governor Newsom activated the State Operations Center (SOC) in Mather, California, to its second highest level to support state, federal and local emergency managers, public health officials and first responders.
 - The SOC will provide operational and logistical support to the California Department of Public Health's Medical and Health Coordination Center (MHCC).
 - The MHCC has been activated since January to coordinate California's public health response to COVID-19.
- California has been an active partner with the federal government on helping impacted Americans get home from China and other areas. We have been deeply engaged in the planning work. We have been the first in the nation to support local testing. And we have extensive experience with managing individuals with symptoms and test-confirmed novel coronavirus.



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- We have been actively and extensively planning with our local public health and health care delivery systems. Here are some of the things we are already doing:
 - California continues to prepare and respond in coordination with federal and local partners, hospitals and physicians.
 - We are providing information, guidance documents, and technical support to local health departments, health care facilities, providers, schools, universities, colleges, and childcare facilities across California.
 - We are coordinating with federal authorities and local health departments that have implemented screening, monitoring and, in some cases quarantine of, over 8,000 passengers returning to the U.S. from China.
 - In coordination with state and local health departments, we are actively engaged in managing suspect and confirmed cases of COVID-19 patients over the past several weeks.
 - We are supporting hospitals and local public health laboratories for collection and shipment of specimens for testing at CDC for novel coronavirus.
 - 11 California public health labs have already received CDC test kits and have begun testing.
 - These labs include CDPH's Laboratory in Richmond, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Tulare, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego County labs.
 - The CDPH Laboratory will provide diagnostic testing within a 48-hour turnaround time.
 - More public health labs will soon be able to test, ramping up to a total of 20 public health labs in California in the coming weeks.

How Can People Protect Themselves:



Every person has a role to play. So much of protecting yourself and your family comes down to common sense – things you learned as a kindergartner:

- Washing hands with soap and water.
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Follow guidance from public health officials.
- It is also important that anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, call their health care provider first before seeking medical care so that appropriate precautions can be taken.
- Staying away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.

About the Disease

- The family of coronaviruses has been around for some time. Some coronavirus are common, like the ones that cause the common cold. Coronavirus Disease 2019, or COVID-19, is a new a kind of coronavirus.
- The most common symptoms include fever cough and respiratory symptoms. Our experience to date is that most people, more than 80%, have mild or no symptoms, but some have more complicated course, including pneumonia.
- We are learning more about its transmission, but the most common symptoms are respiratory, so its primary mode of transmission is through coughing and sneezing.

About the Tests

- The CDC is providing test kits to public health labs in the U.S., including California, to detect the novel coronavirus. The test kits contain all the



elements necessary for a laboratory to test and confirm the presence of the disease. Each test kit contains enough ingredients to test between 350 and 400 individuals. As of March 7, there are 25 such kits in California at various public health labs. Additional test kits have been ordered.

- At this time, both oral and nasal swabs are taken at a hospital or by a physician who suspects COVID 19. This is handled through regular procedures for specimen collection, much in the same way flu testing is handled. There are no special materials needed for this collection. Those specimens are delivered, again much in the same way flu specimens are delivered, to the nearest public health lab for testing.
- Commercial laboratories will be coming online for testing beginning next week, and again, regular procedures will apply to specimen collection, transportation and testing. California is working closely with the CDC to request and receive more testing capacity, as needed. The CDC has fulfilled those requests on an ongoing basis and, as needs expand, California continues to request more testing capacity.

Q&A:

Question: Do you have materials on COVID-19 in other languages?

Both the [CDPH](#) and the [CDC](#) websites have information in Spanish, Chinese, and English.

Question: What is the status of the future repatriation flights coming to California?

The U.S. State Department and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services serve as the lead authorities for repatriation missions and are best equipped to address questions around this mission.

Question: What is the status of the federal quarantine?

The federal government is responsible for repatriation efforts and quarantine procedures for travelers returning from China. The federal government is best equipped to address this question.

Question: Who is paying for the quarantine? Will the state and counties have to foot the bill?

The federal government has reassured the state that it will cover the costs related to repatriation and the federal quarantine.



Question: What is CDPH's role in transporting individuals to hospitals?

CDPH will work through the Public Health and Medical System to ensure appropriate transportation is arranged. CDPH has a state contact in place in order to transport passengers identified at SFO or LAX that need to be in federal quarantine at one of the air force bases.

Question: Tell me more about how California got approval to do testing here and how it works.

California now has the ability to test for novel coronavirus in-state at the Public Health Department's lab in Richmond using the same test as the CDC uses for passengers that are part of the federal repatriation efforts. This means California public health officials will get test results sooner, so patients can get the best care.

Question: What is the status of using Fairview Developmental Center for federal quarantine?

On Friday, February 28, the federal government informed the state that it has determined it does not need to use the Fairview Development Center site for the isolation of passengers from the Diamond Princess Cruise ship given the imminent end of the isolation for those passengers and the small number of persons who ended up testing positive for COVID-19.

The initial estimates the CDC had provided were that as many as 50% of the passengers would test positive within the isolation period but the actual results have been substantially lower, changing current needs for isolation. The temporary restraining order prevented Fairview from being available at a time when it was critically needed.

Having people who are not sick occupying available hospital beds places a burden on the health care system and limits critical access for patients in a time of great need.

Question: Should public events be cancelled?

The California Department of Public Health is not recommending the cancellation of public events. There is no evidence of sustained person-to-person transmission of the virus in in the U.S. The health risk from COVID-19 to the general public remains low at this time.

California's state and local health officials are actively working to protect the health of Californians. California has a limited number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 and we don't have indication of it spreading widely in our communities at this time.



Other Resources and Press Releases

[CDC Webpage](#)

[CDPH Website](#)

[COVID-19 Guidance Documents](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions About Use of Stockpiled N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators for Protection from COVID-19](#)

[Interim Guidance for Protecting Health Care Workers from Exposure to 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#)

[State Health & Emergency Officials Announce Latest COVID-19 Facts](#)

[Governor Newsom, State Health Officials Announce More than 22 Million Californians Now Eligible for Free Medically Necessary COVID-19 Testing](#)

[Federal and State Partners Protect the Community of Oakland while Supporting the Safe Return of Passengers from the Grand Princess Cruise Ship](#)

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