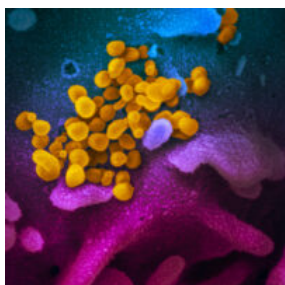


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COVID-19 AND HIV UPDATES

MARCH 3, 2021

SIGN UP FOR OUR BIWEEKLY NEWSLETTER HERE



The SARS-CoV-2 virus
(NIAID)

Below are this week's East Bay COVID-19 and HIV updates. This page is usually updated on Wednesday evenings with data and resources gathered from many collaborators in [Alameda County](#), [Contra Costa County](#), [Solano County](#), CA state.

VACCINES

MASKS

GUIDANCE

RESOURCES & LINKS

ARCHIVES

PDF SUMMARY

Click on these links for vaccines, masks, guidance on prevention, testing and wellness, resources and links, archived weekly updates and the weekly PDF summary. [East Bay HIV service organizations](#) are providing services by phone, video with some in-person visits available.

Jump to:

- [Key East Bay COVID-19 updates](#)
- [New vaccine studies](#)
- [Community spotlight](#)
- [Vaccine eligibility and access; vaccines for people living with HIV](#)
- [Trends in cases and transmission rates](#)
- [Disparities: new data and studies](#)
- [Harm reduction: prevention for vaccinated people and maximizing mask protection](#)
- [Trainings, funding, job opportunities and other resources](#)
- [Top links, guidance and where to get tested](#)

You are invited to join us on Thursday, April 29, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm to strengthen HIV service collaborations! This East Bay linkage and retention network workshop will focus on strengthening our online resources and contacts to streamline warm hand-offs, rapid linkages and access to a holistic array of services. [Please click here](#) for more info and to [register](#).

On February 25, we held an online discussion on the **current state of COVID-19 in Alameda County**, the vaccine and roll-out, and strategies to protect our community from the virus and misinformation. [Please click here](#) for the slides and video recording.

In HIV-related news, the **Ready, Set, PrEP program** is providing **a new mail-order** prescription option. PrEP medication may be delivered to a person's home or health care provider in

Despite advances in HIV treatment and prevention, large inequalities still exist in the USA

participating states.

The *Lancet* published a **special issue on HIV in the US**, including a call to action, coverage of inequities and HIV in key communities. [Click here to download the articles.](#)

EAST BAY COVID-19 UPDATES

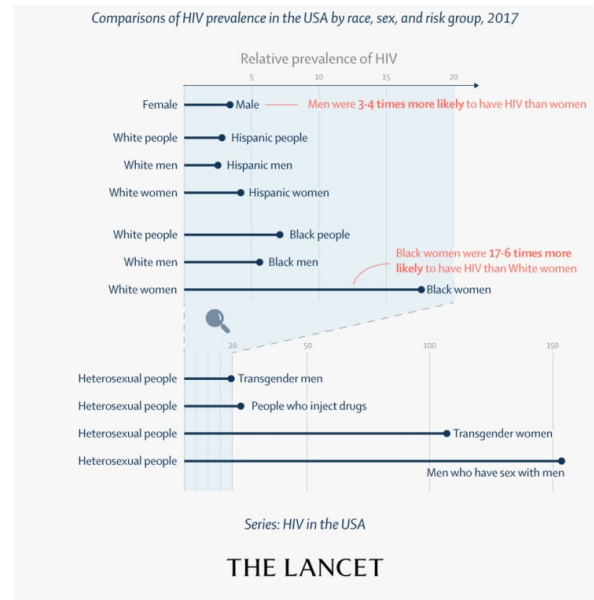
COVID-19 daily case and hospitalization rates in the East Bay have fallen by 60-80% over the past month. Death rates in the Bay Area have declined but remain higher than in 2020. As counties start to loosen restrictions, we are at a critical and yet hopeful point in the pandemic. We can prevent another surge if we keep up masking, distancing and getting people vaccinated.

Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano counties remain in the **highest-risk purple tier** this week with slightly more than 7 cases per 100k residents, while neighboring San Francisco and Santa Clara counties moved into the red tier. Estimated **transmission rates** in the Bay Area have been below 1 (0.66 to 0.76), so cases are decreasing and officials are hopeful we can advance to the red tier in the next week or two. [Alameda County's new vaccination dashboard](#) shows that nearly 23% of residents ages 16 and over have received at least one vaccine dose as of March 3.

The California variants (B1427/9) have been found to be dominant in the Bay Area, more infectious (by ~35%) and associated with increased ICU and death rates in two UCSF studies reported on February 22, one by the [Unidos en Salud group](#) and one by [Dr. Charles Chiu's sequencing lab](#). **The B1351 (South African) variant** was reported on February 10 in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties, and so far 2 cases with travel history have been identified in Alameda County. The P.1 (Brazilian) variant has not yet been found in California, but [new data](#) from Manaus estimates that the variant is 1.4-2.2 times more transmissible and can reinfect people who've had COVID before. Alameda County will soon send out a health alert with instructions on how to report variants, vaccine breakthroughs and repeat infections.

Please continue to **wear masks, keep distance and help everyone get vaccinated as soon as we can**, especially with more **infectious variants** identified in the Bay Area. Please see below for more prevention tips.

Promising new vaccine outcomes data from nursing homes in Alameda County show major reductions in outbreaks and a 74% decrease in deaths after vaccine roll-out started at the end of December. Dr. Ronn Berrol, Summit ED Director, also reports a significant reduction in hospitalizations, especially among older people, and an 80% reduction in ICU cases.





Titapu Mataafa, MA at LifeLong East Oakland, holding a celebratory wreath/crown of empty Moderna vaccine vials, made by Dr. Laura Miller, CMO of Community Health Center Network.

It's been a busy week for COVID vaccines! Johnson & Johnson's one-dose vaccine [received authorization by the FDA on February 27](#), adding a third vaccine to our supplies that is simpler to administer and can be stored for up to 3 months in a regular fridge. Alameda County expects to get the first shipment next week and is considering prioritizing distribution to mobile sites, people experiencing homelessness and hospital discharges, situations in which follow up with a second dose has major logistical barriers. The vaccine was found to be 100% effective against hospitalization and death, 85% against severe disease and 66% effective overall 28 days after the single dose. Johnson & Johnson plans to deliver 20 million doses nationwide by the end of March.

The federal government has also negotiated **increased doses from Pfizer and Moderna** to have enough to vaccinate roughly half of eligible adults nationwide by the end of March, and enough doses to vaccinate all adults by the end of May. Having the doses produced is the first step in a complex process to getting vaccine into people's arms.

The best vaccine is the one that you can get the soonest. All three authorized vaccines are highly protective, especially against severe disease, and 100% effective in clinical trials against hospitalization and death. Don't throw away your shot because you're picky!

Vaccinations are available now for people over 65, nursing home residents and people over 65, and workers in health care, education/child care, emergency services and food/agriculture. In Alameda County, vaccinations are also underway at shelters, and at least 36% of [Project Roomkey](#) residents have been vaccinated.

Last week the **FEMA mobile vaccine unit** (see photo) partnered with **Native American Health Center and Resilient Fruitvale** (La Familia, including Homies and La Clínica) to provide outreach, education and easier-access vaccinations to people living in the Fruitvale neighborhood of Oakland. The partnership has provided 250-500 vaccine doses each day and hopes to extend and continue this service.



Other new vaccine access points that have opened in the last month include: [the Alameda County Fairgrounds](#) mass vaccination site, [the Oakland Coliseum](#) mass vaccination site, [CVS pharmacies](#) and [Rite Aid pharmacies](#). Please see additional details below.

NEW VACCINE STUDIES

Real-world vaccine data shows high efficacy and safety: [A real-world study](#) of 1.2 million people in Israel confirms high efficacy for mRNA vaccines 92% overall for any infection, 94% for symptomatic infection, and suggests a 90% reduction in asymptomatic infection for people vaccinated with the Pfizer mRNA vaccine. [Two new studies](#) from Britain showed that a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine produced very high levels of antibodies, humoral and T-cell immune responses in people who previously had COVID-19, supporting a policy to prioritize first and second doses for people with no previous infection to maximize vaccine coverage and impact.

First dose effectiveness studies: The first dose of the **Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine** was found to be 73% effective in

preventing COVID-19 among people at least 70 years old in England 35 days after the dose, researchers wrote in a [pre-print paper posted online on March 1](#). This is good news for the world, since the AstraZeneca vaccine is affordable and easy to make, store and deploy. Earlier clinical trials for the vaccine did not enroll as many older people, so this data adds important effectiveness outcomes among those 70 years old and over.

The same study showed that a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine was 61% effective overall, 80% effective at preventing hospitalization, and 85% effective in preventing death for people age 70 and over after 4 weeks. This data also reassures us that these vaccines are effective against the UK variant. ([Lopez Bernal](#))

New large population vaccine safety data from the CDC on February 19 found that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were safe and side effects were rare. Nearly 14 million vaccinations were tracked and found that of the adverse events reported (injection site pain, headaches, fatigue, muscle aches), 91 percent of those cases were not serious.

Alameda Health Consortium has [posted](#) new downloadable flyers on **COVID Vaccine Myths and Facts and FAQs** in English, Español, 中文, and Arabic. [Click here](#) to download.

CA state legislature passed the Golden State Stimulus plan on February 23. The package will provide direct relief payments for working Californians earning less than \$30,000. For Californians left out of federal stimulus programs, \$600 one-time tax refunds to Californians with income of \$75,000 or less who were excluded from federal stimulus payments because they file taxes with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), rather than a Social Security Number (SSN). To receive the \$600 Golden State Stimulus payment for CalEITC filers, as well as the \$600 for ITIN filers, eligible Californians must complete their 2020 tax returns.

The California Legislature and Governor Newsom passed a **school reopening plan** ([Senate Bill 86](#)) on March 1, including \$2 billion in incentives and prioritizing vaccinations for teachers to encourage reopenings during the remaining school year as well as \$4.6 billion for summer school and additional mental health and tutoring services.

Providers are encouraged to talk with patients and clients about vaccinations to combat misinformation and address concerns. Communities of color continue to turn to their trusted health providers for counsel, and [providers are changing minds about vaccinations](#). The ICD-10 code [Z71.89](#) may be used for vaccine counseling done in medical provider visits. Dr. Sunny Lai from Highland's HIV clinic compiled [Guidance for talking with patients about vaccines and FAQs for PLWH](#) ([click to download the PDF](#)).

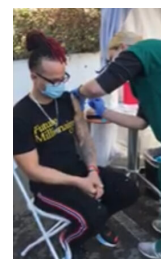
People needing medical care for any condition are still encouraged to seek care as our clinics and hospitals remain open with strict safety protocols to take care of all people.

COMMUNITY VACCINE SPOTLIGHTS



Moisés Cruz Jáuregui, EBGZT, dice: “Una vacuna significa tener la posibilidad de prevenir una enfermedad. El COVID19 ha lastimado mucho nuestra comunidad y a la vez nos ha enseñado lo fuertes que podemos ser juntos. Tuve la oportunidad de recibir la vacuna y me siento muy agradecido y afortunado por mi mismo y por la comunidad con la trabajo. Cuando tengan la oportunidad, aprovechenla y opten por protegerse y proteger a los que aman!”

Vincent Williams, Oakland LGBTQ Center, says: “The idea of getting a vaccination was very scary for me. Being a person of color. But seeing that I could take potential steps in protecting myself out weighed my skepticism. I had some side effects from the first shot. But the second was a breeze. I am proud, and glad to say, ‘I got vaccinated!’”



VACCINE ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS

As of March 3, Alameda and Contra Costa and Solano Counties have all opened eligibility to all people ages 65 and over as well as workers in health care, education/child care, emergency services, and food/agriculture.

CA vaccine priority groups are [defined here](#).

Starting March 15, Californians with high-risk health conditions will become eligible: “healthcare providers may use their clinical judgement to vaccinate individuals age 16-64 who are deemed to be at the very highest risk for morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 as a direct result of one or more of the severe health conditions included in this [provider bulletin](#).” Please see the graphic below. HIV, regardless of CD4 or immunocompromised status, is *not* one of the qualifying health conditions.

To access vaccines, we recommend the following steps:

1. **Sign up for all the notification systems** available to you: see links below.
2. **Check on your vaccine eligibility** with your medical provider and/or county for when the vaccine is available for your age or occupation group. See links below.
3. **When vaccine is available** for your group:
 - If the notification systems work, you should get a link for appointments when vaccine is available for your group.
 - Check online or call your medical provider periodically for appointment availability if you are eligible and haven't gotten a notification or appointment yet.
 - If you cannot get a vaccine through your health provider, check if you can get a vaccine through a public (county) vaccination site.
 - Please see below for links to medical providers and public vaccine sites. [Oaklandside](#) has [additional details on their website](#).
 - Don't give up! (Even though it can be frustrating and confusing.) Keep checking and trying; eventually there will be enough vaccine.

All COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost to you.

Notifications for when vaccine is available for you:

There is no unified notification system, so you may choose to sign up for many different notification systems to stay informed about the full breadth of vaccination opportunities available to you:

- **California State** MyTurn notifications (in English, Español, 中文, Tagalog, Arabic, 한국어, తెలుగు, Tiếng Việt)
- **Alameda County** notifications (in English, Español, 中文; [click here for how-to video](#))
- **City of Berkeley** notifications
- **Solano County** notifications
- You can also find out if your medical provider has a notification system.

Vaccines through medical providers:

- **Kaiser members**
- **Sutter members**
- **Stanford Health members**
- Many **community health centers** are providing vaccine appointments to eligible members. Please contact your provider to find out more. [Asian Health Services members: click here](#). [Alameda Health Systems members: click here](#).

Vaccines for the public at mass vaccination sites:

- **Oakland Coliseum:** [Click here for the MyTurn webpage](#) to check eligibility and appointment availability. New toll-free phone line: 833-422-4255.
 - People in the region over age 65 and some frontline workers (health care workers, educators,

- food/agriculture and emergency workers) are eligible.
- This site is run by FEMA and CA state emergency services and receives its own vaccine supply.
- Both drive-through and walk-up appointments are available.
- Appointment slots are added as supplies come in, starting in the early morning, so keep checking for availability if you first don't succeed.
- [Click here to watch a video](#) from NBC Bay Area on what to expect. People getting vaccinated during the first week report having a smooth and efficient experience.
- **Alameda Fairgrounds: is open for Alameda County residents ages 65 and over.** [Click here](#) for appointment info.
- **The Berkeley Golden Gate Fields Buchanan parking lot site** is open for people living in northern Alameda County. More info from [Berkeleyside](#) can be found [here](#).

Vaccines through pharmacies:

- **CVS pharmacies:** vaccinating healthcare workers and people 65 and older.
- **Rite Aid pharmacies:** vaccinating healthcare workers and people 65 and older.

Vaccines for the public through county vaccination sites:

- **Alameda County COVID-19 vaccine updates and notifications** in English, Spanish/Español, Chinese/中文
 - [Click here for how-to video](#).
 - Eligibility: people ages 65+ and workers in health care, education/childcare, food/agriculture, and emergency services.
 - The county is prioritizing people in these neighborhoods that have been disproportionately impacted by the virus: 94601 and 94606 (San Antonio/Fruitvale), 94603 and 94621 (East Oakland), 94607 (West Oakland), 94578, 94541, and 94580 (Ashland/Cherryland) and 94544 (South Hayward).
 - Notifications will be sent out when vaccines are available for your group from county-supplied sites.
 - [Kaiser](#), [Sutter](#), [Stanford](#) and the [Coliseum](#) get their own supply, so check with them separately.
 - Health care workers need to sign up as "health care providers" to get notifications.
 - City of Berkeley vaccine notifications: [click here to register](#)
- **Contra Costa County COVID-19 vaccine updates and appointments**
 - Eligibility: [appointments](#) are available for people ages 65+ and workers in health care, education/childcare, food/agriculture, and emergency services. Please [click here](#) and go to "making an appointment."
 - To bring equity-related concerns to Contra Costa County's attention, [click here](#).
- **Solano County vaccine updates, notifications and access points**
 - Eligibility: people ages 65+ and workers in health care, education/childcare, food/agriculture, clergy and emergency services.
 - Please [click here](#) and scroll to the bottom to see info on where to access vaccines.


Vaccine appointments may still be difficult to access due to limited and uneven vaccine supplies, a fragmented health care system, and a confusing eligibility system. For example, while essential workers in education/child care, food/ag and emergency services are "eligible" in Alameda County, the county has an internal priority sequences to invite sub-groups of these essential workers based on exposure, age, uninsured status and zip codes at highest risk. **When you're eligible, keep checking and trying, and you will eventually get a vaccine appointment.**

The CDC has updated their [quarantine guidance](#) for people who are fully vaccinated and exposed to COVID-19 in community settings: "People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against the disease within the last three months and show no symptoms."

Who is eligible for vaccines now?


Bay Area counties are following **CA state guidelines on vaccine prioritization**, which were updated on February 1. **Alameda County** additionally uses the following criteria to determine whom to invite to make appointments at county vaccination sites through their notification system:

Alameda County Vaccine Prioritization



Alameda County is now vaccinating:

- Health Care Workers
- People in Long Term Care Facilities
- People ages 65+
- Food/Agriculture/Restaurant/Grocery workers
- Emergency Services workers
- Education/Childcare workers



Within each category, prioritizing:

- Older adults
- MediCal or Uninsured
- Areas with very high COVID-19 case rates (HPI Q1 + priority zip codes)
- People with direct contact with clients or the public at work
- People who cannot work from home
- People with limited mobility

Appointments by invitation

Sign up for notification:
<https://covid-19.acgov.org/vaccines>

State Update: Expanded Eligibility for Vaccine as of 3/15/21

People with underlying medical conditions:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease (stage 4 and above)
- Chronic pulmonary disease (oxygen dependent)
- Down syndrome
- Immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Heart conditions (excludes hypertension)
- Severe obesity (Body Mass Index $\geq 40\text{kg/m}^2$)
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus (with hemoglobin A1c level greater than 7.5%)

OR

If as a result of a developmental or other severe high-risk disability one or more of the following applies:

- Individual is likely to develop severe life-threatening illness or death from COVID-19 infection
- Acquiring COVID-19 will limit the individual's ability to receive ongoing care or services vital to their well-being and survival
- Providing adequate and timely COVID care will be particularly challenging due to individual's disability

PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV AND COVID-19 VACCINES

Currently all people living with HIV (PLWH) are recommended to get the COVID-19 vaccine once eligible by age, work exposures and/or underlying conditions. The approved vaccines are not live vaccines and are considered safe for people living with HIV regardless of CD4 count. A diagnosis of HIV alone, regardless of immune status, is not one of the qualifying medical conditions for vaccines under the California's vaccine guidelines [listed here](#). There is [emerging data](#) that people living with HIV and CD4 counts less than 200 are at greater risk for hospitalizations and death, so consider prioritizing

outreach, education and vaccinations for this potentially more-at-risk group.

The [Moderna vaccine trial](#) included 179 PLWH and the [Pfizer trial](#) included 196 PLWH but data on these sub-groups has not been reported separately yet. There is currently no recommendation to check antibody levels for people living with HIV after completing vaccination. We are not sure yet how much commercially available SARS-CoV2 antibody tests such as at Quest and LabCorp check for protective levels of neutralizing spike antibodies generated by the vaccines, but providers and patients may discuss checking for spike IgG antibody levels two or more weeks after the second vaccine dose while we await more data.

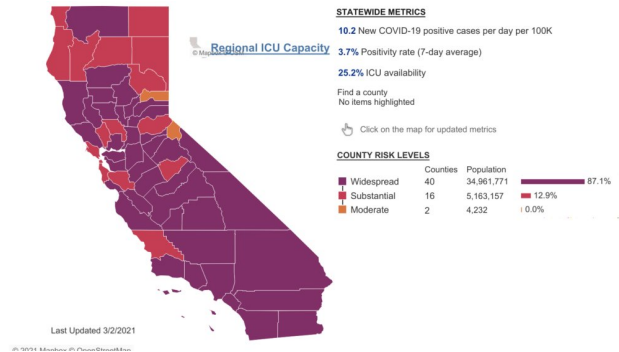
HELP THE VACCINE ROLL-OUT EFFORT!

- **All Alameda County health care providers** are encouraged to [enroll in CalVax](#) to become vaccinators.
- **To volunteer** at a county vaccination site, [please register here](#).

MORE VACCINE RESOURCES

TRENDS IN CASES AND TRANSMISSION RATES

Transmission rates (R_e) continue to be less than 1, which means cases are decreasing. As of March 1, the transmission rates were 0.74 in Alameda County, 0.76 in Contra Costa and 0.66 in Solano County, and 0.67 statewide. Our goal is to support the vaccine roll-out, masking, distancing, staying outdoors and avoiding gatherings to keep transmission rates less than 1.



ALAMEDA COUNTY DATA AS OF MARCH 3:

- Purple “widespread” tier week 16.
- 8.2 new cases of COVID-19 per day per 100,000 residents (down from 12.3 last week).
- 2.4% test positivity rate countywide (down from 3.2%).
- 3.7% test positivity in the lowest quartile [Healthy Places Index \(HPI\)](#) census tract (down from 5.3%).
- 0.74 transmission rate on the [Cal-CAT](#) model (up from 0.63).
- 23% vaccination rate (first dose) residents ages 16+ (up from 18.6%)

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DATA AS OF MARCH 3:

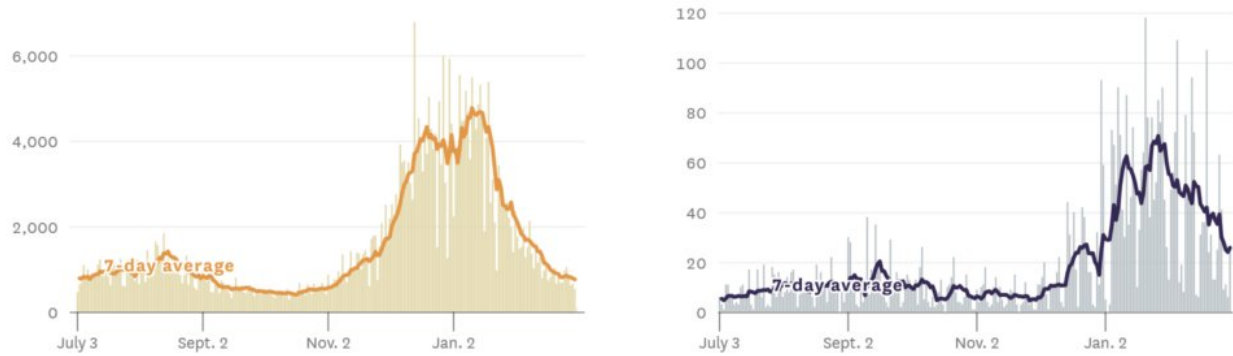
- Purple “widespread” tier week 16.
- 10.9 new cases of COVID-19 per day per 100,000 residents (down from 13.9).
- 3.5% positivity rate (down from 4.1%).
- 5.6% test positivity in the lowest quartile HPI tract (down from 6.3%).
- 0.76 transmission rate (down from 0.78).

SOLANO COUNTY DATA AS OF MARCH 3:

- Purple “widespread” tier week 16.
- 8.2 new cases of COVID-19 per day per 100,000 residents (down from 12.8).
- 2.6% positivity rate (down from 4.4%).
- 3.7% test positivity in the lowest quartile HPI tract (down from 5.4%).

- 0.66 transmission rate (down from 0.74).

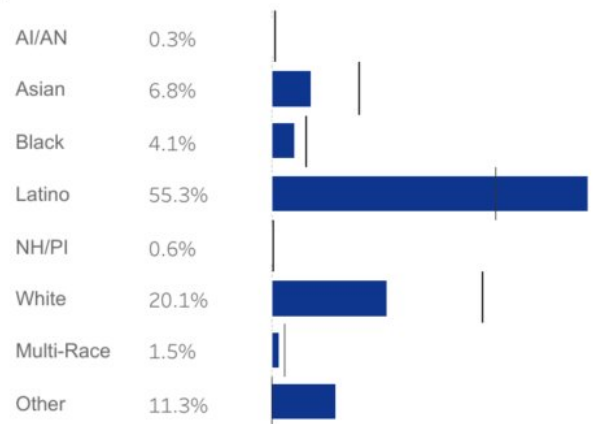
New reported cases and deaths in the Bay Area, by day



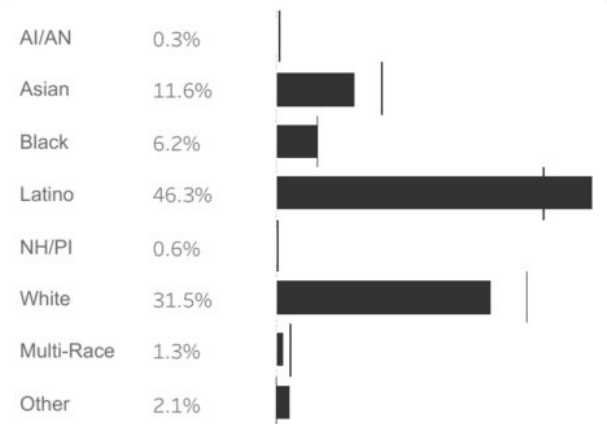
SF Chronicle, 3/3/21: COVID-19 daily cases and deaths in the Bay Area.

DISPARITIES: NEW DATA AND STUDIES

Positive cases by ethnicity



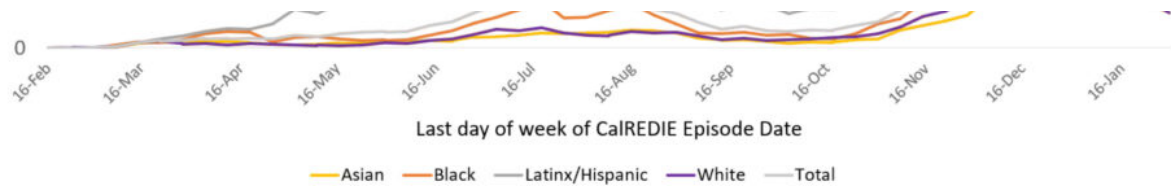
Total deaths by ethnicity



CDPH CA State COVID-19 dashboard 3/3/21: Latinx and Black/African American Californians continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Alameda County COVID-19 weekly case rate





Includes City of Berkeley
Cases source: CalREDIE Data Distribution Portal download February 11, 2021 8:00 am.



Alameda County
Health Care Services Agency

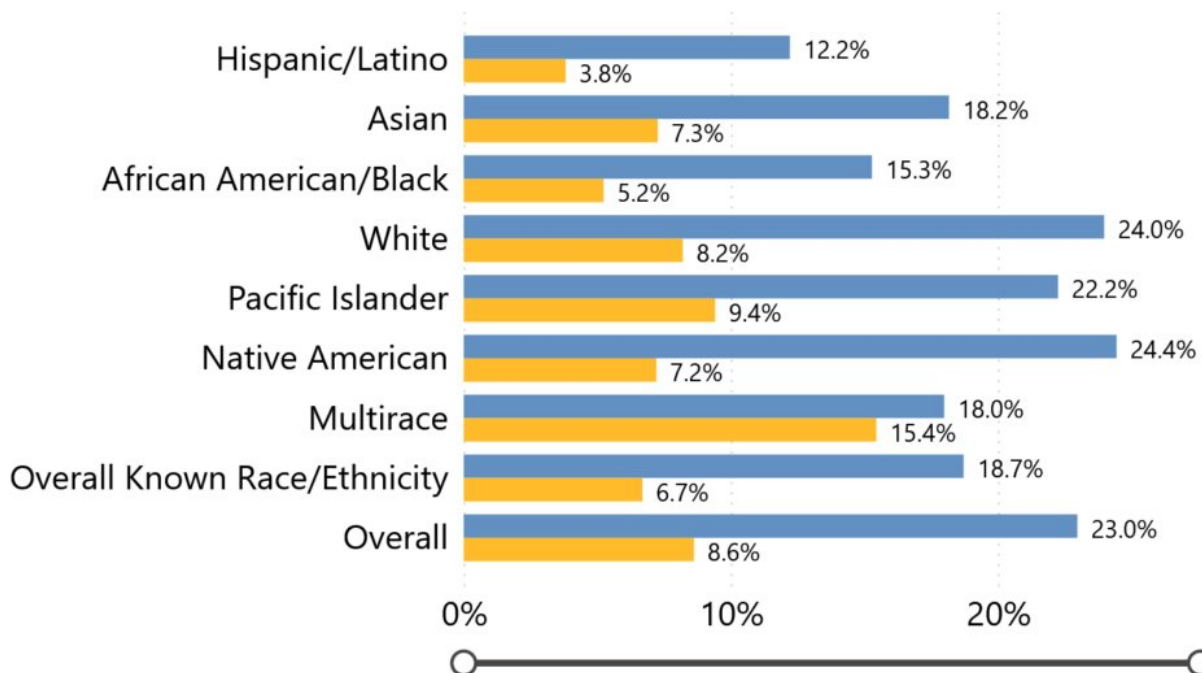


Alameda County Public Health Department
Celebrating Healthy People in Healthy Communities

In **Alameda County**, while case rates continue to fall from their January peak among all race/ethnicity groups, Latinx people are still more than 4 times more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 than white people. Black/African American residents are nearly 2 times more likely to die from COVID-19 compared to their white neighbors.

Doses by Race/Ethnicity (% of population >= 16 Years)

● First Dose ● Fully Vaccinated



Alameda County vaccination rates by race/ethnicity on 3/3/21 show that Latinx, Black/African American and Asian residents continue to be less likely to have been vaccinated compared to white residents. Vaccination rates in higher income areas such as Piedmont are almost twice as high (40%) than the hardest-hit cities of Oakland (23%) and Hayward (21%).

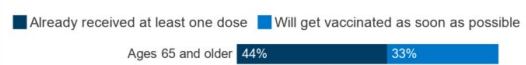
A vaccination site at Fremont High School in East Oakland found that allowing for drop-in and walk-up vaccinations increased vaccination rates among Black and Latinx residents. The County will be advocating for more walk-up vaccination opportunities located in the hardest-hit neighborhoods.

The latest KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor reports that a majority (55%) of U.S. adults now say they have received at least one dose of the vaccine (18%) or that they will get it as soon as they can (37%), up from 47% in January and 34% in December. Black and Latinx adults continue to be more likely than White adults to say they will “wait and see” before getting vaccinated. People were most concerned about side effects and how quickly vaccines

Figure 5

Older Adults, Democrats Most Likely To Want COVID-19 Vaccine As Soon As Possible Or Have Already Gotten it

Percent within each group who say they have **already been vaccinated** or when an FDA authorized vaccine for COVID-19 is available to them for free, they would get the vaccine **as soon as they can**:

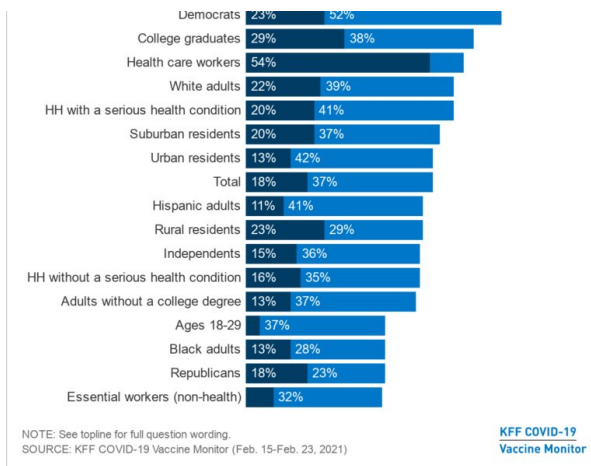


were developed. There was substantial misinformation, with fears they would have to pay for the vaccine (it is available at no cost) and that it would give them COVID-19 (it does not).

Mental health emergencies increased in 2020 among children and adolescents: A new report from the CDC showed that compared with 2019, in 2020 the proportion of mental health-related ED visits for children ages 5–11 and 12–17 years increased approximately 24% and 31%, respectively. Another new study describes how rates of suicidal ideation and attempts were up by 25% or more among young children and adolescents coming into a pediatric emergency room in Houston, Texas in 2020.

A new nationwide study of COVID-19 in children found that among the 539 patients with MIS-C and 577 patients with severe COVID-19, patients with Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) were more likely than those with severe COVID-19 to be 6 to 12 years old, be Black/African American, and have severe cardiovascular or mucocutaneous involvement and more extreme inflammation.

A new study from UCSF found that **pandemic-related unemployment caused 30,000 additional deaths in US**. Attributable deaths were disproportionately high among Black/African Americans, men, and those with lower educational attainment.



HARM REDUCTION TIPS AND RESOURCES

Promising real-world vaccination data is showing signs that vaccinated people have lower likelihood of transmitting the virus to others. The early data shows that vaccinated people are less likely to get asymptomatic infection (90%) and lower viral loads when infected (4x decreases). In turn, lower viral loads and asymptomatic infection are linked to less viral spread.

What does this mean in practice? (based on data above and Dr. Monica Gandhi's expert opinion)

- **Vaccinated people with vaccinated people:** get together without restrictions.
- **Vaccinated people around unvaccinated people and general public:** keep on masks and distancing for now until we have more data (early data is promising that the risk of transmission from a vaccinated person is very low).
- **Unvaccinated people around unvaccinated people:** keep all usual restrictions with masks, distancing, staying outdoors, avoiding crowds.

WHAT WE CAN DO AFTER GETTING VACCINATED

Dr. Monica Gandhi's suggestions for tiered approach:



The CDC released a **new study of COVID-19 outbreaks in gyms and urges mask wearing** for people going to gyms, and to keep the masks on when they exercise as well as remain 6 feet or more apart from others.

MAXIMIZING MASK PROTECTION

With evidence of the highly infectious U.K. and South African variants circulating in the East Bay, we may be wondering if we should increase our prevention efforts.

Wearing two masks on top of each other (double-masking) and 3+ layered masks can provide more protection so long as you can keep them tight on your face. A **new mask study by the CDC** demonstrates that tight-fitting multilayered masks and double-masking can decrease exposure to aerosols by up to 95%.

Before you go out, please make sure your mask set up is comfortable and breathable enough to keep on your face! No matter how many layers a mask has, it will not be useful if you can't keep it covering your nose and mouth.

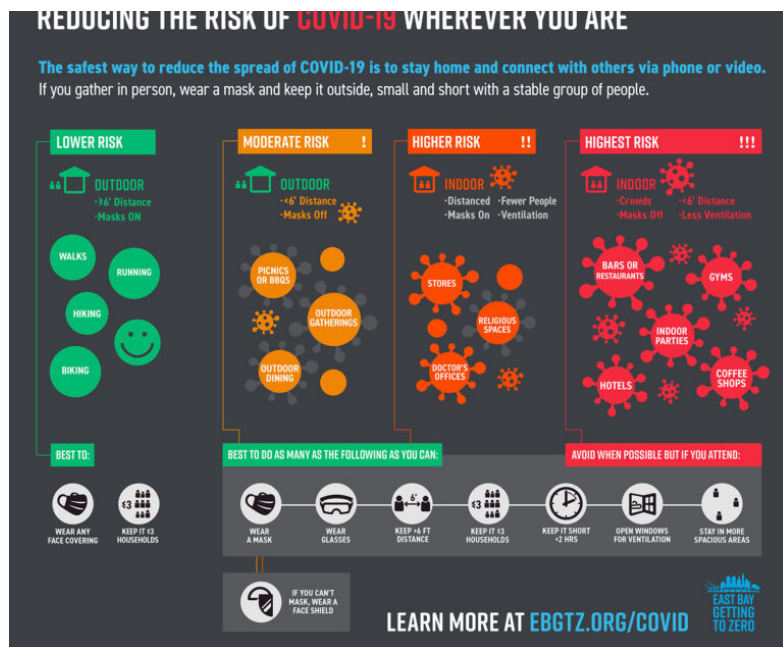
Here are the qualities that make masks more protective, which we recommend using in indoor public settings (see higher/highest risk settings in our [infographic](#) below):

- **Use tightly-woven fabric or non-woven material**, like in surgical masks.
- **Use multiple layers:**
 - 2 layers provide decent protection and 3 or more layers provide maximal protection.
 - A non-woven layer, such as a disposable surgical-type mask or filter layer can help repel droplets.
 - You can double-mask by using a fitted cloth mask with a disposable surgical-type mask, like in the diagram.
 - Consider adding a face shield and/or goggles in the highest risk settings.
- **Make it fit tight:**
 - Use tight/snug cloth masks.
 - Reduce top gaps by using masks with adjustable nose wires.
 - Reduce gaps in ear loop masks by tying knots near the sides. ([video here](#))
 - Make sure the mask has a tight seal all around, over your nose, sides of your mouth and under your chin.
 - In high risk work settings, get fit-tested for an N95 mask (the gold standard in protective masks).
 - Keep in mind that KN95 masks are not fit-tested and are **less protective** than N95 masks. Treat them like surgical masks.



Figure 1. Recommended Masks for Public
Top: basic; bottom: maximal protection.

References: Diagrams from *Maximizing Fit for Cloth and Medical Procedure Masks to Improve Performance and Reduce SARS-CoV-2 Transmission and Exposure, 2021* by the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Response Team and *...Importance of Face Masks for COVID-19* by Monica Gandhi and Linsey C. Marr. Scientific references for these masking tips are located [here](#).



References: [Bay Area public health guidance on gatherings](#); [summary of evidence and scientific studies](#)

Spanish.

Free COVID testing sites: [Click here for Alameda County](#), [Contra Costa County](#) and [Solano County](#) testing sites.

To slow the spread of COVID-19, we all need to stay home when we can and when we go out:

- [Wear masks](#) and glasses,
- Stay outdoors whenever possible,
- Avoid crowds and maintain at least six feet distance from others,
- Sanitize or wash hands frequently, and
- Stay home when sick.

OTHER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Trainings and webinars:

- The **Santa Clara County Getting to Zero Initiative**, in partnership with Gilead Sciences, is proud to bring a 3-part **Cultural Humility Program** that seeks to address barriers to accessing HIV treatment and preventative care. The program will provide an overview to healthcare providers, administration, and staff to create an inclusive, supportive healthcare environment for individuals facing structural and socioeconomic barriers to HIV care. To register, visit the following links:
 - **Module 1:** [Recognizing the Importance of Cultural Awareness Across the HIV Care Continuum](#). Thursday March 4, 2021 12 pm-1 pm
 - **Module 2:** [Navigating Cultural Humility Across the HIV Care Continuum](#). Thursday March 11, 2021 12 pm-1 pm
 - **Module 3:** [Practicing Cultural Responsiveness Across the HIV Care Continuum](#). Thursday March 18, 2021 12 pm-1 pm
- Join **Alameda County Care Connect** for the following upcoming trainings:
 - **Matter of Trust: Strategies to Address Medical Mistrust**. Wednesday, March 10 and Thursday March 11, 9:00 – 12:30 PM. [Register Here](#).
 - The **Empathy Effect: Skills for Countering Bias to Improve Health Outcomes (Part 2)**. Friday, March 5th, 10:00-

COVID-19 Harm Reduction Strategies

Use as many of these as you can!

Strategy	% reduction
1. Vaccination	95% mRNA EUA vaccines
2. Masking	60-95%
3. Staying outdoors	~95% in one case series
4. Distancing	53-88%
5. Eye protection	78%
6. Hand hygiene	28-45%
7. Testing/isolation	33%



Updated 12.23.20 * Data compiled by Sophy S. Wong, MD
Icons by Good Ware, Freepik and Srip on Flaticon.com
Please see [EBGTZ.org/resources](https://ebgtz.org/resources) for the complete list of sources for this table.

Our **summary of COVID prevention research** is constantly updated with new studies.

Our COVID-19 prevention and harm reduction infographic is available in English and Spanish!

Please download them [here in English](#) and [here in Spanish](#) and share with your clients, coworkers, friends and family! To download printable PDF versions, [click here for the PDF in English](#) and [click here for the PDF in Spanish](#).

12:00pm. [Click here to register.](#)

- **Cultural Humility**– An Approach to Promote Health Equity. Tuesday, March 9th, 10:00-12:00pm. [Click here to register](#)
- **Working with People who Use Drugs**– Trauma and Substance Use. Thursday, March 11th, 2021, 10:00-12:00pm. [Click here to register.](#)
- The **Community Health Worker (CHW) institute** is a two-day virtual training (April 9th & 12th, 2021) which will occur prior to the National Latinx Conference on HIV/HCV/SUD. Applicants strongly encouraged to apply are: People living with HIV and allies who are interested in or already serving their communities as a CHW/peer/navigator/linkage to care coordinator. Learn more about the opportunity [here](#).
- **Oakland LGBTQ Center** is sponsoring a **Mental Health First Aid** virtual training. This is an interactive training equipping the general public to help persons with mental health challenges connect to care. First Aiders will complete a 2-hour, self-paced online class, and then participate in a 6.5-hour Instructor-led virtual training. Space is limited. Registration ends March 18, 2021. You can register by contacting: Tai'Rance "Omega": He/Him/King at (510) 781-2922.
- **Working While Receiving Disability Benefits** workshop by the **Positive Resource Center** in San Francisco focuses on how working affects eligibility and how to avoid pitfalls of SSI & SSDI Benefits. Learn the implications of returning to work when receiving SSI & SSDI and how to appropriately report earnings when returning to work. Thursday, March 25th, 10-12pm. Register for the session [here](#).

Jobs, Internships, Scholarships and more:

- **Alameda County Public Health Department Director for Communicable Diseases** job announcement: Deadline for applications is March 4, 2021. [Click here for more info.](#)
- **Transform Health** is a nationally certified women and minority-led health policy consulting firm based in California. They are hiring for a **Senior Policy Analyst**. This is a new position building off of their existing project needs and expanding a current role.
- **La Clinica** is looking for a **Street Outreach Worker/HIV Linkage Coordinator** as well as for many other positions. Browse opportunities [here](#).
- **Prevention Institute** has partnered with Healthline to offer this year's **Stronger Scholarship**. The scholarship will award three Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Pacific Islander youth leaders \$7,000 scholarships. Leaders must be undergraduate students working to improve community conditions and reduce health inequities in their communities. Learn about and apply for the Stronger Scholarship [here](#).
- Oakland-based **Human Impact Partners** is accepting applications for a full-time summer **Communications and Advocacy Intern**. This will be a remote role supporting their communications, advocacy campaigns, and digital content strategy. View the job description including details on how to apply [here](#).
- The DreamSF Fellowship is a paid leadership and professional development program for immigrants in the Bay Area. This program is welcome to everyone who meets the minimum qualifications. You can apply regardless of your immigration status. Applications are due April 14th, 2021. Learn more and apply [here](#).

Other resources:

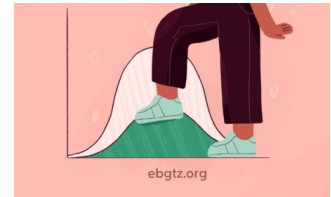
- DHHS released an **enhanced version of the America's HIV Epidemic Analysis Dashboard (AHEAD)** on February 22. You can now filter by specific EHE HIV indicators and national demographic information, compare multiple jurisdictions on the same chart, and download data in multiple formats. This release also includes updated linkage to care and diagnosis data, as well as HIV indicator data for all 50 states.

HIV services during COVID-19: [Click here for Contra Costa HIV services](#) and see our online directory for [Alameda County HIV services](#).

If your organization is in Alameda County and needs COVID-related supplies or staffing, please go to the [Emergency Medical Services website](#) to request PPE and testing supplies and request staffing.



Please follow and share our [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.



A note about this webpage: COVID data updates will be posted to this page on Wednesdays in the late afternoon during non-holiday weeks. New studies will be continuously added to our summary of [COVID-19 harm reduction strategies](#). The emailed [HIV+COVID-19 update newsletters](#) are now on a bi-weekly schedule of 1st and 3rd Wednesdays.

Official Alameda County COVID-19 weekly updates are accessible on the [county website](#) and will not longer be posted on this page. You can sign up to receive the Alameda County weekly COVID-19 newsletter by emailing Jamie.Yee@acgov.org.

[CLICK HERE FOR ALAMEDA COUNTY WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS](#)

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP:

- [California Health Corps](#) – Use this link to register for the California Health Corps which is a State program for trained medical and healthcare workers to sign up and provide availability to assist in the COVID-19 response.
- [Medical Surge Volunteer Sign Up](#) – Use this link to register as a volunteer with the County of Alameda to assist with the COVID-19 response. Medically and non-medically trained volunteers will be needed. [Click here for more information](#).

TOP LINKS:

- **HIV:** [FAQs for people living with HIV \(PLWH\)](#) and [Preguntas Frecuentes in Spanish](#), [Guidance for PLWH \(CDC\)](#), [Guidance for HIV providers \(HIVMA\)](#), [Vaccines for PLWH \(HIVMA\)](#), [UNAIDS infosheet on COVID-19 vaccines and HIV](#)
- **HIV services during COVID-19:** [Click here for Contra Costa HIV services](#) and see our online directory for [Alameda County HIV services](#).
- **Key Communities:** [Harm Reduction Coalition](#), [Immigrants Rising](#), [Protecting Immigrant Families: Public Charge](#), [Healthcare for the Homeless](#), [COVID info in Asian languages](#)
- **COVID Vaccines:** [California State](#), [CA vaccine tracker](#), [Alameda County](#), [Contra Costa County](#), [Solano County](#)
- **COVID exposure alerts in California:** [CA Notify app](#)
- **COVID Testing, Food, Shelters:** [Alameda County COVID testing and services](#), [what to do if you test positive or have contact with someone with COVID](#), and [isolation housing](#), [Contra Costa County COVID testing](#)
- **Public Health Department Updates:** [Alameda County](#), [Contra Costa County](#), [Solano County](#), [California State](#)
- **COVID case/death data:** [Alameda County](#), [Contra Costa County](#), [Solano County](#), [California State](#), [California \(SF Chronicle\)](#), [US \(CDC\)](#), [US by race \(CDC\)](#), [National/Global \(JHU\)](#). **Variants:** [in the US \(CDC\)](#) and [in California](#).
- **DIY Face Coverings and Masks:** [CDC \(easy no-sew\)](#), [Kaiser \(sewn\)](#), [Maker Mask \(sewn, science-based\)](#), [Olson Mask \(sewn\)](#)
- **COVID PPE, staffing or testing supplies:** [Alameda County EMS– request PPE](#), [request staffing](#) or [request testing supplies](#).

ALAMEDA COUNTY GUIDANCE:

[Click here](#) for all current approved businesses and activities.

Download links for **Alameda County community or business** guidance on: [Face coverings](#), [social bubbles](#), [childcare](#) and [camps for all children](#), [graduations](#), [vehicular gatherings](#), [construction](#), [curbside retail pickups](#), [manufacturing and warehousing](#), [personal services](#), [youth extracurricular](#) and [general outdoor recreation activities](#).

Download links for **Alameda County clinical guidance** on: [COVID-19 testing](#), [antigen testing](#), [isolation orders in 7 languages](#) for all people getting tested, [reporting COVID-19 cases](#), [Project Roomkey isolation housing](#), [home health agencies](#), [remdesivir allocations](#), [routine vaccines](#), [reporting pediatric Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome](#), [resumption of non-](#)

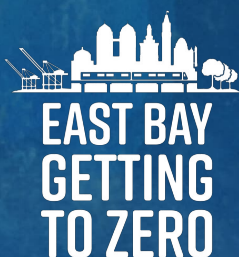
urgent medical services, testing in Skilled Nursing Facilities and COVID-19 vaccinations.

If your organization is in Alameda County and needs COVID-related supplies or staffing, please go to the [Emergency Medical Services](#) website to request testing supplies, antigen test kits and/or PPE, and request staffing.

LOOKING FOR COVID-19 TESTING?

- [Alameda County COVID testing sites](#): This webpage includes community-based sites offering free testing for anyone with symptoms, including people without health insurance.
- [Contra Costa County free drive-through or walk-in COVID testing](#)
- [Solano County free testing sites](#)
- Please check the listing for updates and call the testing site before you leave your home/shelter/camp/car to make sure they are open for testing, you are eligible, and register if needed.
- If you don't have a provider and have COVID symptoms: In Alameda County, call Alameda Health System 510-437-8500 for a phone screen and guidance. In Contra Costa County, call 844-729-8410. In Solano County, the county COVID warmline is 707-784-8988.
- If you're having difficulty breathing and unstable, please go to your nearest emergency room.

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