

CITY OF TORRANCE INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date: November 18, 2020

TO: ALL USERS

FROM: Aram Chaparyan, City Manager

SUBJECT: Updated Guidance from LA County and Holiday Safety Guidelines

As we have all noted in recent weeks, the number of COVID-19 cases are increasing across Los Angeles County and the Nation. Attached are the latest Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 from LA County Department of Public Health and their guidance on how best the community can safely celebrate the upcoming holiday season. Please take time to review this important information.

The FAQs from the County remind us that the best protection we all have to reduce COVID-19 transmission is to:

- Wear a face covering,
- Practice six feet of physical distancing,
- Self-isolate for at least 10 days when sick,
- Quarantine for at least 14 days when having close contact with someone with COVID-19,
- Practice good hygiene by washing hands frequently and sanitizing shared spaces regularly.

With the holidays near, one question that has come up is if the City has any requirements of employees upon return from travel. At this time, the State of California and LA County are only recommending a quarantine upon return for travel. As long as you are not sick or subject to a quarantine because of close contact with someone who has COVID, you may return to work after traveling. The City will continue to monitor Health Orders from the County and will update all employees with any changes.

It has been a challenging year for all of us. Thanks to your dedication, we continue to serve the Torrance Community with the level of service they expect and deserve. Wishing you and your family a joyous Thanksgiving!

Please stay safe and healthy!



Aram Chaparyan
City Manager

Attachments: FAQs for Novel Coronavirus (LA County Public Health)
Guidance for Celebrating Holidays (LA County Public Health)

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Recent Updates:

11/17/20: Added recommendation to stay at home for 14 days and consider getting tested after non-essential travel or being in a high-risk situation. Added that face coverings can protect the wearer as well as others and recommend that high risk individuals avoid gatherings but if they attend use a medical grade mask for any indoor activity.

10/28/20: Added information about gathering with people outside your household and resources for coping with stress.



1. How are coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses, human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person through:

- Droplets produced through coughing, sneezing, and talking
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person

It may also be possible that a person can also get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way that it spreads. Some people get COVID-19 without ever showing symptoms but they can still spread the infection to others.

2. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild symptoms to severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and death. Some people with COVID-19 never get symptoms.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include one or more of the following: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion or runny nose, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not complete. Please talk to your medical provider about any of these or other symptoms that are severe or concern you. See ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare for more information about symptoms.

3. What should I do if I have these symptoms?

If you get symptoms, talk to your healthcare provider and consider testing for COVID-19. Remain home and away from others if you are ill. If you have COVID-19, you should follow the *Home Isolation Instructions*

Key Points

- COVID-19 is spread through close contact or by touching an object or surface with the virus on it.
- The best protection is to:
 - Wear a cloth face covering
 - Practice physical distancing
 - Wash your hands frequently
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
 - Self-isolate if you are sick
 - Quarantine if you have had close contact with someone with COVID-19
- People who have symptoms of COVID-19 or who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 should get a test.

For more information:

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Call 2-1-1

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

(ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation). These include staying home for at least 10 days from when your symptoms first appeared AND at least 1 day (24 hours) after your fever has gone without the use of medications AND your symptoms have improved.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, be sure to tell all of your [close contacts](#) that they need to be in quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you. See the *Home Quarantine Instructions for Close Contacts to COVID-19* (ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine) for additional guidance.

Older adults, and those with weak immune systems or underlying health problems who experience COVID-19 symptoms should call their doctor early, even if they have mild symptoms.

People with emergency warning signs that include difficulty breathing, chest pain or pressure, bluish lips or face, confusion or difficulty waking up should call 9-1-1 immediately or go to an emergency room. If it is not urgent, call your doctor before going in to seek care.

4. What should I do if I think I may have been exposed to COVID-19?

If you meet criteria for a “close contact” self-quarantine for 14 days from your last exposure to the infected person and get tested for COVID-19. A close contact is any of the following people who were exposed to a person with COVID-19:

- An individual who was within 6 feet of the infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- An individual who had unprotected contact with the infected person’s body fluids and/or secretions, for example, being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils or saliva, or providing care without wearing appropriate protective equipment.

A person with COVID-19, is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their symptoms first appeared until they are no longer required to be isolated (as described in [Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19](#)). A person with a positive COVID-19 test but no symptoms is considered to be infectious from 2 days before their test was taken until 10 days after their test. Additional instructions can be found in the home instructions guide.

If you don’t meet the criteria to quarantine but were in a crowded situation and/or in close contact with people who were not wearing face coverings and maintaining 6 feet of distance, consider getting tested and staying home for 14 days. If you have recently returned after non-essential travel to another state or country, you are asked to self-quarantine at home for 14 days. In these situations, limit contact to only those in your household. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from others in your household, wear a face covering even at home, and wash your hands and clean high-touch surfaces often. If you get symptoms, call your medical provider and discuss getting tested.

5. Should I get tested for the coronavirus?

It is recommended that people with symptoms of coronavirus get tested. If you are experiencing new symptoms that you think may be from coronavirus, let your doctor know and discuss getting tested. You can also visit covid19.lacounty.gov/testing or call 2-1-1 to schedule a same-day or next-day appointment

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

for free testing.

If you have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, it is recommended that you get a test. This is to see if you are infected and could have infected others. Note that you will still need to stay in quarantine even if your test is negative. See ph.lacounty.gov/covidtests for more information.

If you may have been exposed to COVID-19 because you were present at a gathering or activity where you were in a crowded situation and/or in close contact with people who were not wearing face coverings and maintaining 6 feet of distance, consider getting tested and stay home for 14 days.

6. How is COVID-19 treated?

There is no cure for the illness caused by COVID-19. However, many of the symptoms can be treated. Treatment is based on the patient's condition. Be aware of scam products for sale that make false claims to prevent or treat this infection. For more information see [COVID Scams and Fraud](#).

7. What can I do to protect myself and others from COVID-19?

There are steps that everyone can take daily to [reduce the risk](#) of getting sick or infecting others with COVID-19.

You should:

- Wear a cloth face covering whenever you are outside of your home and around others who are not part of your household.
- Practice [social or physical distancing](#). Whenever you are out, keep at least 6 feet apart from everyone else as much as possible.
- Avoid crowded places and give yourself space from others.
- Keep interactions with non-household members short.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact, like kissing and sharing cups or utensils, toys, or sports equipment (unless it has been disinfected before sharing).
- Avoid or clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces often using a regular household cleaning product.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow (not your hands).
- Increase ventilation - go outside or open windows if it is safe to do so.
- People with underlying health conditions have a much greater risk for serious illness from COVID-19. It is very important for the County's vulnerable residents to stay at home as much as possible

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

and have groceries and medicine delivered.

8. Can I visit with my family and friends?

Private gatherings with people from different households increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission, with the risk increasing the longer the private gathering and the more people attending. The fewer people you and your household have in-person contact with, the lower your risk of getting COVID-19. You and your household are allowed to gather with one or two other households as long as:

- The gathering is outside and lasts no more than 2 hours.
- Everyone wears face coverings, except when eating or drinking.
- Everyone stays at least 6ft from non-household members.

The fewer people you and your household have in-person contact with, the lower your risk of getting COVID-19. If you do choose to take this risk, keep the group stable with the same 1-2 household(s) rather than participating in multiple private gatherings with different households over time. For additional rules on private gatherings see the guidance on [small private gatherings](#).

People at higher risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19 (such as older adults and people with chronic medical conditions) are strongly urged not to attend any gatherings, especially indoor gatherings. Medical-grade masks may provide greater protection than cloth face coverings, so people at high risk should strongly consider using these medical face coverings if they will be participating in any indoor gatherings.

9. Should I wear a facemask?

Cloth face coverings must be used by everyone 2 years and older to cover the nose and mouth when they leave their home. These face coverings are used to help protect others from your respiratory droplets in case you have COVID-19 and are not showing signs of infection. New research indicates that cloth face coverings also offer some protection for the wearer from respiratory droplets from others. People with symptoms of COVID-19 or who have COVID-19 should use a surgical facemask (if available) when they need to leave their home for medical appointments.

Infants and children under the age of 2 should not wear cloth face coverings. Adults should always supervise children under the age of 8 while they are wearing a face covering to ensure the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation. Anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious or otherwise unable to remove the mask or cloth face covering without help or who has been instructed by their medical provider not to wear it for medical reasons should not wear one. See [Cloth Face Covering Guidance](#) for more information.

10. Is it safe to travel?

The state of California has issued a travel advisory recommending that all non-essential travel be cancelled and that any travelers entering or returning to California self-quarantine for 14 days. Travel increases your chances of getting infected and spreading COVID-19, so staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick. Airports, bus stations, train stations, and rest stops are all places travelers can

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

be exposed to the virus in the air and on surfaces and it can be hard to keep 6 feet apart from other people. If you are thinking of traveling, consider the following:

- Is COVID-19 spreading where you're going?
- Are you, or anyone you are traveling with, visiting, or spending time with at your destination or when you return home, more likely to get very ill from COVID-19?
- Does the country, state, or local government where you are traveling to or returning to require you to stay home for 14 days after traveling?
- If you are required to stay home or if you get sick with COVID-19, will you have to miss work or school?

Do not travel if you are sick, or if you have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

If you must travel, protect yourself and others by following the steps in the question above “What can I do to protect myself and others from COVID-19?” and the tips for preparing for travel on the CDC [Travel](#) webpage. This webpage also explains the risks from different types of travel.

When returning after non-essential travel to another state or country you are asked to self-quarantine at home for 14 days and limit contact to only those in your household. Non-essential travel is considered travel that is done as part of a vacation for tourism or for recreation.

If you are considered an essential worker and your travel is for work or school then you are not required to stay at home upon your return to Los Angeles County. Essential workers are those who provide critical infrastructure, economic services and supply chains, health, immediate medical care, and safety and security for the community. See page 5 and 14 of the [Reopening Safer at Work and in the Community Health Officer Order](#) for more details on who is considered an essential worker.

11. How do I know when work, public spaces, or businesses are safely opening?

Visit the Public Health website to see [What's open in Los Angeles County](#). It is a good idea to **check online or call and ask about safety measures before visiting a business.**

Even though some places are now open, it is important to remember that the virus has not changed, and COVID-19 remains a serious risk. It is still easily spread among people in close contact with each other. You can help [reduce the risk](#) of COVID-19 by continuing to practice social (physical) distancing, wear a cloth face covering whenever you are around others, and wash your hands frequently. Also, remember to stay home if you are sick or if you have been in close contact with someone who is sick.

12. What can I do if I get stressed about COVID-19?

When you hear, read, or watch news about COVID-19, it is normal to feel anxious and overwhelmed. It is important to care for your mental as well as your physical health. The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's [COVID-19 webpage](#) and the 211LA webpage (211la.org/resources/subcategory/mental-health) provide local resources to address mental health & wellbeing needs and concerns. Guidance and resources are also available on the CDC webpage, [Coping with Stress](#).

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

If you want to speak with someone about your mental health, contact your doctor or the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at 1-800-854-7771.

14. What can I do if I am feeling harassed or discriminated against?

The County is committed to assuring that all residents affected by COVID-19 are treated with respect and compassion and that we all separate facts from fear and guard against stigma. The outbreak is no excuse for spreading racism and discrimination. If you are being harassed or experiencing discrimination based on race, nation of origin or other identities, you should report it. 2-1-1 takes reports (by phone or online) of hate crimes, hate acts, and incidents of bullying that have occurred within Los Angeles County regardless of whether or not a crime has been committed. Call 2-1-1 or file a report online at <https://www.211la.org/resources/service/hate-crimes-reporting-22>.

15. What else can I do?

- Find a healthcare provider if you don't already have one. If you need help finding a doctor, the 24/7 LA County information line can help - call 2-1-1 or visit the [211LA website](#).
- Get your flu immunization. Flu will be circulating at the same time as COVID-19 and it is important to protect yourself and those around you from becoming ill with flu. For information on where to get vaccinated for free or low cost, call 211 or visit ph.lacounty.gov/media/FluSeason.
- Be prepared with food and essential supplies to last 14 days in case you need to isolate yourself or quarantine.
- Always check with trusted sources for up-to-date, accurate information about novel coronavirus.
 - Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
 - <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
 - California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>
 - World Health Organization (WHO, International)
 - <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

If you have questions and would like to speak to someone, call 2-1-1.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Celebrating Holidays

Recent Updates:

11/9/20: Purchasing trees from holiday tree lots is permitted as long as the holiday tree lot complies with required retail protocol and no amusement park, gathering, or festival type activities occur at the holiday tree lot.

As families start to plan for the holiday season it is important to consider how to celebrate safely in order to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Planning early and identifying safe alternatives to some of the more traditional but risky methods of celebration will be key. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health would like to share information on how to take part in the holiday season in a manner that reduces the risk of spreading COVID-19. Since some of the traditional ways in which holidays are celebrated are not permitted this year, consider some safer alternatives that are listed below.

Not Permitted (gatherings and events are not currently allowed under the Health Officer Order)

- Carnivals, amusement parks or festivals.
- Department store Santa/holiday displays or photo opportunities that do not allow everyone to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from non-household members at all times.

Not Recommended

- Door to door activities, such as caroling, are not recommended because it can be very difficult to maintain proper social distancing on porches and at front doors and ensure that everyone answering or coming to the door is appropriately masked to prevent disease spread.

Permitted and Recommended

- Online parties/contests (e.g. Thanksgiving meal, tree trimming).
- Car parades that comply with public health guidance for [vehicle-based parades](#) including:
 - a. Drive by events or contests where individuals dress up or decorate their vehicles and drive by “judges” that are appropriately physically distanced.
 - b. Drive through events where individuals remain in their vehicles and drive through an area with holiday displays.
 - c. Drive in events where individuals can receive a treat bag (limited to commercially packaged non-perishable treats) or take away item from an organizer while the participants remain in their vehicle.
 - d. Drive in events where individuals drop off or pick up toys or other donations.
- Holiday movie nights at drive-in theaters (must comply with the public health [drive-in movie theater](#) guidance).
- Live Performances or Concerts done at Drive-in theaters (must comply with the public health [drive-in movie theater](#) protocol).
- Holiday themed meals at outdoor restaurants (must comply with the [restaurant](#) protocol).

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Celebrating Holidays

- Holiday themed art installations at an outdoor museum (must comply with the public health [museum protocol](#)).
- Dressing up homes and yards with holiday themed decorations.
- Buy and decorate a Christmas tree (tree lots must comply with the public health [retail establishment protocol](#) and may not have amusement park or carnival type activities such as rides, face painting, petting zoos, food service, bounce houses or visits with Santa that are closer than six feet.)
- Gatherings of 3 households are permitted if they are held outdoors.

The fewer people you and your household have in-person contact with, the lower your risk of getting COVID-19. You and your household are allowed to gather with one or two other households as long as the gathering is outside, lasts no more than 2 hours, and everyone wears face coverings and stays at least 6ft from non-household members. If you do choose to take this risk, it is safer to mix with the same 1-2 household(s) repeatedly rather than with different groups. For additional details on private gatherings see the posted [Health Officer Order for Reopening Safer at Work and in the Community](#).

Travel

Since the holiday season is often a busy travel time, you may be considering doing a bit of travel this time of year for vacation or to visit friends and family. Before you travel consider the following:

- Is COVID-19 spreading at your destination?
 - The more cases at your destination, the more likely you are to get infected during travel and spread the virus to others when you return.
 - The following CDC sites can help you to assess the risk of travel both locally and internationally:
 - [CDC COVID Data tracker](#)
 - [CDC Travel Recommendation by Destination](#)
- Are you or is someone you live with at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19?
 - Anyone can get very ill from the virus that causes COVID-19, but older adults and people of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness if they become infected with COVID-19.
- Does your destination have requirements or restrictions for travelers?
 - Some destinations have requirements, such as requiring people to test prior to travel or to quarantine upon arrival. Check state, territorial, tribal and local public health websites for information before you travel. If you are traveling internationally, check the destination's Office of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Health or the [US Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Country Information](#) page for details about entry requirements and restrictions for arriving travelers.
- It is important to note that LA County recommends that travelers stay home for 14 days when arriving into LA after travel.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Celebrating Holidays

Personal Protection Measures:

Regardless of how you choose to celebrate the holidays it is important to keep the following in mind:

1. Correctly wear a cloth face covering to prevent disease spread¹ when outside your home and around others that are not part of your household.
2. Avoid confined spaces - Actively stay away from indoor and outdoor spaces that don't allow for easy distancing of at least 6ft between you and others.
3. Avoid close contact – Stay at least 6 feet away (3 or more adult steps) from all other people who are not part of your own household, especially while talking, eating, drinking, and singing.
4. Remain outdoors as much as possible when socializing with people not in your household.
5. Wash or sanitize your hands often.
6. Clean frequently touched items regularly.
7. If you are sick, or you have been in contact with someone who is sick with COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19 stay home, away from others, and get tested.

Know where to get reliable information

Beware of scams, false news and hoaxes surrounding novel coronavirus. Accurate information, including announcements of new cases in LA County, will always be distributed by Public Health through press releases, social media, and our website. The website has more information on COVID-19 including FAQs, infographics and a guide to coping with stress, as well as tips on handwashing.

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
 - <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
 - Social media: @lapublichealth

Other reliable sources of information about novel coronavirus are:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

If you have questions and would like to speak to someone call the Los Angeles County Information line 2-1-1 which is available 24 hours a day.

¹ ¹ Wear masks with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19. Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin. For more info, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html> and <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/protection/GuidanceClothFaceCoverings.pdf>