

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of October 5, 2021

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco
<https://www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

Today, there are over 50,400 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 636 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

City acquires two buildings for people with mental health and substance use disorders

Mayor London N. Breed and the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) announced the acquisition of two buildings that will house people living with mental health and substance use disorders as part of the City's long-term plan to strengthen and expand access to behavioral health support. The two buildings, located on Florida Street in the Mission and Dore Street in the South of Market neighborhood, will be transformed into cooperative housing for twenty-six adults under the City's Cooperative Living for Mental Health (CLMH) Program.

The cooperative living model created under CLMH is a key part of San Francisco's work to provide housing and care for people with mental health and substance use disorders. Cooperative living allows people with mental health and substance use disorders to live in community with access to care, services, and treatment in spaces operated by local behavioral health service providers. The model can also assist in progress to independent living. Purchasing cooperative living buildings shields these spaces from market volatility, protecting clients and allowing the City's community-based organization partners to continue to offer much needed affordable housing.

In addition to these purchases that ensure the long-term affordability of existing beds, San Francisco is adding 400 new treatment beds for people experiencing mental health and substance use challenges. This represents a 20% increase in the City's residential treatment capacity. In 2021 alone, San Francisco will see 140 new beds opened, including the following:

- The 20-bed SOMA RISE Center, which will open this winter as part of the City's response to the drug overdose crisis. It will offer a safe indoor space for people who have used methamphetamine or other substances, monitor their health while intoxicated, and connecting them with other health and social services.
- A 10-bed residential treatment facility specifically designed to treat young adults with serious mental health and/or substance use disorders is under design.
- Neighborhood-based psychiatric respite facilities for people experiencing homelessness to shelter in a safe, supportive environment where they can also access ongoing care.

Nonprofit supportive housing and behavioral health care provider Conard House will own and operate the two CLMH properties on Florida and Dore Streets in partnership with DPH. Established in 1960 with the first transitional housing program in San Francisco, Conard House operates and provides social services at nine residential hotels and 19 private apartments across San Francisco, inclusive of the Florida and Dore Street locations.

1140-1142 Florida Street is located in the Mission District and will house eight adults in separate bedrooms, with access to shared kitchens, bathrooms, and a large backyard. 139-145 Dore Street in San Francisco's South of Market (SoMa) neighborhood, will consist of six 3-bedroom apartments that will accommodate 18 adults. In both locations, residents will have individual bedrooms but will share common spaces. Conard House will provide services and case management to residents to ensure success living in their new homes.

The acquisitions and most rehabilitations planned for each site were financed by the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). The Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development expects to provide HAF with permanent financing for the buildings in 2022 following the completion of repair improvements and upgrades.

For the latest update on San Francisco's residential care and treatment expansion, go to: www.sf.gov/residential-care-and-treatment

San Francisco to open COVID-19 testing site for SFUSD students and staff

Mayor London N. Breed, DPH, and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department will launch a new COVID-19 testing site in a parking lot near the Crocker Amazon sports complex, located at 799 Moscow Street and Geneva Street, in partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).

With a capacity to administer 150 tests per day to SFUSD students and staff, the Crocker Amazon testing site will open on Tuesday, October 5, with operating hours of 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays. Walk-ups are encouraged, appointments are not required, and test results will be available within 24 to 48 hours. The SFUSD testing site is located near the club house and can be accessed from Moscow Street.

The site will exclusively serve SFUSD students and staff who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or are considered a close contact of someone who has a positive COVID test. SFUSD is contracting with Color Health, and the City and County of San Francisco is providing the Crocker Amazon sports complex site. A dedicated community testing site for the school district supports the need for schools to remain safely open with minimal disruptions while following DPH guidance. In addition, SFUSD students and staff have access to [free school-based COVID testing](#) through mobile sites across the City.

Earlier this month, the City and SFUSD opened vaccination sites at four schools in the district to make it convenient for anyone eligible in the school community to get vaccinated. Those vaccination sites will be able to expand to accommodate children ages 5-11 once they become eligible, possibly this fall.

SFUSD has partnered with Color Health to conduct the COVID tests to comply with DPH schools guidance, and San Francisco Recreation and Parks is providing the location.

To date, DPH data demonstrates schools remain safe settings for children and staff under COVID safety protocols. Cases among San Francisco residents under age 18 have remained low and stable throughout the pandemic.

SF health care providers prepare to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to children under 12 and booster doses

As health institutions serving the people who live, work, and seek services in San Francisco, DPH is proud of our collective accomplishments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with the communities that we serve, together we followed the science and have attained one of the highest vaccination rates in the world – with 83% of the eligible population fully vaccinated in San Francisco.

We have also responded effectively to emerging challenges like the rise of the Delta variant this summer and helped improve the health outcomes for our population by addressing health needs, continuing to vaccinate, and providing other essential services that have helped slow the spread of the disease and reduced hospitalizations.

As the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced authorization of Pfizer booster doses for individuals 65 years and older and other high-risk groups and evaluates expanded eligibility of vaccines for children ages 5-11, we are preparing for the next stage in our vaccination efforts this fall based on these recommendations.

Upon further federal and state approvals, DPH will be prepared with a collaborative approach from the City's robust network of nearly 100 vaccination sites – from doctor's offices to clinics, pharmacies, and more. Many of these sites were thoughtfully established this year to enable a large proportion of San Franciscans to access a vaccination site within a 10 to 15-minute walk. A number of high-volume sites across the City, including those at all major health systems, have the capacity to administer 200 to 300 doses per day. These also include four school-based sites that can expand to as many as 250 vaccines a day to support the school community as needed.

DPH anticipates a capacity to administer 25,000 vaccine doses per week across these sites to collectively meet demand from eligible children, adults seeking first-time vaccination, and third-dose boosters for those who qualify. We must underscore that our highest priority will be to ensure access to first and second doses for all members of our community, including children ages 5-11 when they become eligible.

For those who have already received the primary dose series, the COVID-19 vaccine continues to be highly effective in reducing risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death. As anticipated federal and state recommendations begin allowing additional groups of people to receive booster doses, such as those who are 65 and older and potential high-risk groups, eligible individuals can work in their booster doses as time and availability allow over the course of several weeks.

Once the appropriate state and federal approvals are issued and individuals are eligible, we encourage people to make appointments for boosters and vaccinations at their health care homes. They may also receive vaccines at local pharmacies. This could also be an opportunity to receive wellness checks that may have been put on hold during the pandemic, or for other vaccination updates such as the annual flu vaccine.

To ensure access for the most highly impacted and vulnerable communities, DPH has numerous health access points within the San Francisco Health Network and Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital that should be reserved for highly impacted and vulnerable communities. We look forward to continuing to serve the health needs of our communities and will provide further

updates about the recommendations and how eligible individuals can receive their vaccines or booster doses when they are available.

CA becomes first state to announce plans to require student COVID vaccinations

After implementing first-in-the-nation school masking and staff vaccination measures, California is the first state to announce plans to require student vaccinations—adding the COVID-19 vaccine to list of vaccinations required for school, such as the vaccines for measles, mumps, and rubella.

In order to further protect students and staff and continue supporting a safe return to in-person instruction for all students, Governor Gavin Newsom directed the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to follow the procedures established by the Legislature to add the COVID-19 vaccine to other vaccinations required for in-person school attendance pursuant to the Health and Safety Code. COVID-19 vaccine requirements will be phased-in by grade span, which will also promote smoother implementation.

Following existing statute, full approval of ages 12+ corresponds to grades 7-12, and full approval of ages 5-11 corresponds to grades K-6. COVID-19 vaccine requirements will be phased in by grade span, either grades K-6 and 7-12. Students who are under the age of full approval, but within the grade span, will be required to be vaccinated once they reach the age of full approval (with a reasonable period of time to receive both doses), consistent with existing procedures for other vaccines. The requirement will take effect at the start of the term following full approval of that grade span, to be defined as January 1st or July 1st, whichever comes first. Based on current information, the requirement is expected to apply to grades 7-12 starting on July 1, 2022. This will apply to all public, private, parochial and charter schools.

The Governor has also directed that adults be held to at least the same standards as students for the COVID-19 vaccine. All staff will be required to be vaccinated no later than when the requirement takes effect for students. The current verify-or-test requirement for staff will be converted to a vaccine mandate no later than when the first phase of the student requirement becomes effective.

Environmental Health's June Weintraub nominated to EPA Advisory Board

June Weintraub, ScD, Water Quality Program Manager of DPH's Environmental Health Branch, was nominated to serve as the Chair of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) National and Governmental Science Advisory Board Drinking Water Committee. One of June's roles will be overseeing the review of the current Contaminant Candidate List (CCL). The CCL is a list of water contaminants that are currently not subject to any proposed national drinking water regulations but are known to occur in public water systems. The Committee's work will help determine if these CCLs should be regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This is a well-deserved honor, and it is great to see June's skills being applied on a national level.

[SFDPH in the News](#)