

HOMELESS OUTREACH WORKERS

To stay informed about COVID-19 in San Diego County, please visit <http://www.coronavirus-sd.com>

For additional resources, please visit <https://www.rtfhsd.org/>

Purpose: This document is to provide guidance to those conducting outreach and providing services to those experiencing homelessness. It includes information helpful to disseminate to people experiencing homelessness.

- Stay up to date with local and state COVID-19 activity and developments (in addition to CDC):
- County of San Diego: <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/coronavirus/>
- Regional Task Force on the Homeless: <https://rtfhsd.org/>
- State of California: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>
- HUD: [Disease Risks and Homelessness](#)
- [Infectious Disease Toolkit](#)
- [National Health Care for the Homeless Council: https://nhchc.org/clinical-practice/diseases-and-conditions/influenza/](https://nhchc.org/clinical-practice/diseases-and-conditions/influenza/)

Provide education for staff and clients:

- Train employees and clients to clean their hands often with an ethanol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least ethanol based hand sanitizer of 60% or greater OR isopropyl based hand sanitizer of 70% or greater or wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water are preferred if hands are visibly dirty.

When Conducting Outreach:

- Don't do outreach unless you are well
- Sanitize your hands after EVERY encounter
- Have hygiene and prevention materials available to share
- Educate unsheltered population on sanitation importance – share hygiene kits with handsanitizer
- If a person is symptomatic, assist them in calling their medical provider. If they do not have a medical provider, assist them in calling the 211 Nurse Triage Line. **DO NOT REFER TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OR HOSPITAL FOR TESTING**
- Regional Liaisons:
 - Central/South:
Dijana Beck, (619) 338-2636, Dijana.Beck@sdcounty.ca.gov
 - North County/East/North Central:
Kim Forrester, (619) 668-3841, Kim.Forrester@sdcounty.ca.gov
- If transportation is provided, clean vehicles after each transport- wipe down all surfaces
- Remain 6 feet away at all times from everyone, including those who are homeless, and the members of the outreach team
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth

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Tracking and Data

- Use HMIS outreach module
- Use PITC GIS locations of those over 60
- A list of identified encampments will be provided to outreach teams in each region

Additional precautions for staff:

- All sick employees and volunteers must stay home
- All staff and volunteers should have their temperature checked prior to working each day. A temperature of over 100.4 should require the individual to stay home
- Staff and volunteers with cold or flu-like illness should not work until 24 hours after fever and other symptoms have gone
- Ensure sick leave policies allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms of infection
- Do not require a healthcare provider note for employees who are sick with cold or flu-like illness to return to work, as healthcare provider offices may not be able to provide such documentation in a timely way
- Staff and volunteers developing symptoms while at the service location should immediately wear a facemask, notify management, and leave work
- Encourage the use of and distribute disposable face masks to any person with a cough or other symptoms
- Encourage all staff, volunteers and clients to get the influenza vaccine to prevent illness that is similar to COVID-19
- If someone is coughing or sneezing, have them wear a disposable face mask when they are within 6 feet of other people
 - Change the mask if it gets saturated
 - Wash hands after changing mask



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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Especially between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). People who are more at risk of getting very sick from this illness are older adults, and people with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and lung disease.

When performing outreach, please maintain a distance of six feet from the individual if possible.

- Greet the individual and ask how they are feeling.
- Ask the individual if they have a fever or feel feverish, have a cough or feel short of breath.
- If the individual answers yes to having the above symptoms, and there is **suspicion of exposure to COVID-19, immediately ask the individual to put on a mask.** Please ask the individual to practice hand hygiene by washing with soap and water. If soap and water is not available, ask them to use hand sanitizer.
- Assist the individual in contacting their medical provider. If they do not have a medical provider, assist them in contacting the 211 Nurse Triage Line.
- If the individual requires non-emergency transportation, arrange transportation in a vehicle with an interior that can be wiped clean and with windows that can be rolled down. Have the individual wear a mask during the transport, keep the windows down during transport. Wipe down the interior with an EPA approved disinfectant following the manufacturer's directions. See this resource for a link to the EPA's list of approved disinfectants and other guidance:
https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/deh/fhd/food/pdf/publications_covid19en.pdf.
- If the individual requires transportation for a medical emergency, call 9-1-1. Inform the dispatch operator that the person may have symptoms of COVID-19. Assist the individual in seeking immediate medical attention if they are experiencing signs of serious illness such as:
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to arouse
 - Bluish lips or face



SAN DIEGO
**Regional Task Force
on the Homeless**