

# COVID-19 BARHII Response

## Messaging Resources

The goal of this document is to provide Messaging Recommendations and Support through Resources being produced by our member Local County Health Departments and Community Partners. The Messaging recommendations cover the following issue areas impacted by COVID-19:

- Housing Stability
- Economic Security for Small Businesses and Gig Workers
- Equitable and Effective Messaging around COVID-19 Response
- Messaging to Combat Racism and Discrimination
- Messaging for COVID-19 Best Practices, Wellness, and Shared Responsibility



## Housing Stability

*Source: Housing Now!*

### Messaging around Eviction and Foreclosure Moratoriums

As we all grapple with the Coronavirus pandemic, we need to pull together as a community and try to prevent worse outcomes. We see how, as is often the case, housing stability is at the intersection of health, economy and our politics.

With this pandemic, even more families could be facing eviction and homelessness at a time when housing stability is necessary to recuperate from illness and to stem the further spread of this disease. Yesterday, [EBHO](#) sent a letter to the [City of Berkeley](#), the [Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors](#), and the [Alameda County Board of Supervisors](#) calling on them to enact a moratorium on new eviction and foreclosure filings, to continue cases slated for trial for the next 30 days, and to place money in a special fund to provide up to two months of rental assistance for individuals who need it. We support the Oakland City Council in taking the actions available to them to stop evictions and encampment clearings during this time.

Today, East Bay Housing Organizations joins advocates throughout the state in asking our members to sign [this community petition](#) calling on the Governor to commit to the following measures:

- 1. An Immediate Moratorium on Rent Increases**, all Evictions and Foreclosures - The need to protect residents that live paycheck to paycheck from the economic fallout of this virus includes protecting them against facing price gouging, eviction and homelessness. Eviction would only further spread this disease and make its containment harder because people would not have a home to care for the health, safety and welfare of their families.
- 2. Immediate End to Displacing Unhoused Encampments**- We must put an end to the **enforcement/displacement actions against encampments of the unhoused during this crisis.**
- 3. Emergency Rental or Mortgage Assistance** - We must provide support for workers who have to forgo work due to the coronavirus outbreak. This also encourages workers to stay home when sick rather than risking spread of the virus by continuing to work to prevent income loss.
- 4. Prevent Utility Shut-Offs** - Widespread loss of income will also likely cause increased numbers of people to fall behind on bills and risk having their water, gas, electricity, and other basic utility services shut-off. All public and private utilities doing business in the state should halt all utility shut-offs during this crisis.

No matter what we look like, where we live or what's in our wallets, getting sick reminds us that at our core we're all human. But today, a handful of politicians and the corporate insurance and pharma industries that fund them keep us from getting the testing, vaccines and treatment we need to get and stay well.

We must stand with and for each other. Only by standing united can we rewrite the rules to ensure better health for us all

## Economic Security for Small Businesses and Gig Workers

*Source: Small Business Majority*

### **Narrative building and policy support:**

In past crises, we've seen Wall Street and big industry dominate the news coverage and, therefore, play an outsized role in proposed policy solutions. Today, it is imperative that we amplify the authentic stories and voices of Main Street small businesses throughout the current crisis so that we can prioritize their needs during development of supportive policies and legislation.

- **Small business owner stories:** We are developing stories from our network of 58,000 small business owners whose businesses have been impacted by the pandemic. As we develop narratives around small business owners' experiences, we will launch traditional and social media campaigns to share these stories in the public sphere. We also will train small business owners as spokespeople who can share their stories at press conferences and in media interviews.
- **Polling:** We are planning immediate, rapid-response polling to help us better understand the immediate impact of the pandemic on the nation's small business and highlight strategies to protect small businesses through the crisis.
- **Rapid-response policy development:** As we keep these small business stories front and center in our media outreach, we will develop, prioritize and advocate for policy solutions to immediately help small businesses, their communities and their employees.

## **Equitable and Effective Access to Information**

*Source: Public Health Awakened*

- 1. Public information campaigns must be accessible to people with disabilities. This means things like:**
  - Don't post or tweet out images (particularly images of text) without image descriptions/alt-text;
  - Don't release fliers or documents that cannot be read by screenreaders;
  - Don't hold press conferences without *\*both\** ASL interpreters *\*and\** real-time captioning, and have these positioned close enough to the speaker so that they are likely to be caught in-frame by news cameras;
  - Use microphones consistently at public meetings, no matter how loud your voice is

## 2. Spirit of 1848 and Public Health Awakened COVID-19 Email Guidelines:

In order to make emails as clear as possible and to allow people to choose which emails they read and which they don't please follow the following guidelines for sending any COVID-19 related emails

- **Clear subject line:** Make sure your subject line is clear. Start your subject line with "COVID19" and follow it with a short description of what the email is about (e.g., COVID19 Resources on eviction moratoriums, or COVID19 Question about undocumented folks). If you are forwarding an email from somewhere else, consider changing the subject line.
- **Keep related conversations to one thread:** If you are replying to a particular email, reply to that email rather than starting a new one (and keep the subject line the same so it says in one thread). This will help keep conversations in a single thread. Also, if you are sending an email that is on a related topic to another email, consider replying to that email to keep a topical thread.
- **Say a little bit about what you're sending:** If you are sending a link or forwarding an email, write a sentence or two to give it a little context
- **Pay attention to "reply all" vs. "reply":** When you reply to an email, double check who is in the "to" field and if the google group is listed, make sure you are intending to send to the full group.

## Messaging to Combat Racism and Discrimination

Source: Berkeley Media Studies Group

- From the Public Health Alliance of Southern California focused on racism & xenophobia (attached)
- #RepresentCA: COVID-19 Messaging Guide  
<https://medium.com/@PowerCalifornia/representca-covid-19-messaging-guide-1695e7336994>
- Opportunity Agenda: <https://www.opportunityagenda.org/explore/insights/talking-about-covid-19-call-racial-economic-and-health-equity>
- Narrative Initiative: [https://mailchi.mp/narrativeinitiative/community-coronavirus-deep-narratives?fbclid=IwAR2KxqZnmVaXAmT3opQberfR-1dEdpkjKG9KPd\\_ILhbmain6aLFINm1Vj0o](https://mailchi.mp/narrativeinitiative/community-coronavirus-deep-narratives?fbclid=IwAR2KxqZnmVaXAmT3opQberfR-1dEdpkjKG9KPd_ILhbmain6aLFINm1Vj0o)
- Talking about coronavirus and poverty: <https://results.org/blog/talking-about-poverty-and-coronavirus/>
- Not a guide, but I think they have good messaging: <https://www.pwn-usa.org/wegotthis-to-our-pwn-family-regarding-the-coronavirus-epidemic/>
- Related to immigration (please contact Protecting Immigrant Families before passing this one on):  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MpvaGOY7177VtRCvOLx5x7j0nEO0awxwGP\\_mpJ86oAQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MpvaGOY7177VtRCvOLx5x7j0nEO0awxwGP_mpJ86oAQ/edit)

- Addressing Discrimination & Racism (3/17/2020): As both fear and misinformation about COVID-19 continue to grow, health departments and community members are reporting increased incidences of physical, verbal, social and economic discrimination against Asian Pacific Islander communities. A subcommittee of PHI's Public Health Alliance of Southern California, with input from PHI's Berkeley Media Studies Group, developed a set of rapid response guidelines to be considered for implementation by local health departments in order to help actively reject and prevent discrimination and racism, and work to promote the health and safety of all people living in our communities.

<https://www.phi.org/news-events/1742/protecting-public-health-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-phi-response-resources>

- Local Health Department Support Guidance Document (see PDF from Public Health Alliance attached)
- **Contra Costa County Guidelines:** *With permission we adapted a messaging tool kit from the Seattle-King County Public Health Department to address Stigma associated with COVID-19. This can be found at <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/social-media-tools>*

Viruses Don't discriminate and neither should we.

- Stigma will not fight Corona Virus. Sharing accurate information will.
- We urge everyone know the facts about the coronavirus, not to stigmatize individuals and families from particular groups, and to speak out against bias and harassment.
- Misinformation about coronavirus can create fear and hostility that hurts people and makes it harder to keep everyone healthy.
  - Reliable and factual information is available on our website from our local and state health officials and from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
  - We would like to recognize the Seattle-King County Public Health for allowing CCHS to repurpose their Anti-Stigma resources, including a fact sheet now available on our web site and a soon to be available, Anita stigma social media kit that can be used by anyone in our county.
  - Please Take advantage of these resources to prevent, interrupt, and respond to stigma.

## Effective Messaging Around COVID-19

Source: Anat Shenker-Osorio, ASO Communications

### [COVID-19 Messaging Guide](#)

COVID-19 (or coronavirus) has further etched the stark contrast between those barred from access to healthcare, affordable medicine, stable housing, and paid leave ...and those of us who can count on these essentials. At the same time, it has revealed the fundamental interconnection of our nations, our communities, our health and our very lives.

And yet, so much of today's messaging – both from our opposition and parroted unwittingly from our side – brings separation and exclusion to the fore. Just the simple use, for example, of “social isolation” for what we ought to call *physical* distancing tacitly undermines our core narrative: that we pull through this only by pulling together.

As people are more susceptible than ever to fearing “the other,” a powerful few exploit divisions rooted in xenophobia, racism and the you're on your own ethos in order to distract from their failures to address this pandemic. Without a coherent counter-narrative to overtake these lies, our demands and solutions have little chance of breaking through.

The words we use and the solutions we prescribe in moments of crisis can shape hearts and open minds to new ways of understanding our world. With this in mind, we created this guide to help advocates and activists effectively promote progressive policy demands for the health and well-being of us all, rooted in an insistence on cross-racial solidarity and care for those most harmed.

[While admittedly geared toward the U.S. national perspective, we hope you find this COVID-19 Messaging Guide adaptable to your own context.](#)

- Insight into how we can win progressive victories in the face of xenophobia and racism in *The New York Times* opinion piece [Does Anyone Have a Clue About How to Fight Back Against Trump's Racism?](#)
- The [“Access to Medicines” episode of our Brave New Words podcast is a relevant source of inspiration and instruction.](#)



## **Best Practices During COVID-19 Response (see pages that follow)**

*Source: Contra Costa County Public Health Department*

A Note: Contra Costa's messaging around COVID-19 response represents the wider public health voice in terms of response priorities and appropriate messaging guidelines for equity and public safety. For the additional reasons listed below, we are attaching some of the messages that have been circulated from their Health Department.

- Suggests clear, specific actions
- Explains why guidance is what it is (which is important the Bay Area seeing as guidance is stricter than statewide)
- Highlights specific actions for those most vulnerable
- Help those who do not see themselves as vulnerable understand how their choices impact those who are vulnerable (i.e. slowing the spread is important because it means the spread doesn't exceed health care capacity)
- Explains community/structural issues (is. health care capacity)
- Showcases the importance of amplifying messages through multiple messengers (trusted messengers are very important right now)



eUpdate - March 12, 2020

## **COVID-19 Guidelines on Gatherings and Social Distancing**

### ***Our efforts can successfully slow community spread***

Each of us can be helpful in fighting the spread of COVID-19, a virus which is more contagious and appears to be more lethal than the seasonal flu.

On March 10, the Board of Supervisors passed an emergency declaration responding to the COVID-19 virus and our Health Department issued guidance for social distancing. For the latest information from our County Health Services, please bookmark this page -- [coronavirus.cchealth.org](https://coronavirus.cchealth.org)

On March 11, the California Department of Public Health issued statewide guidance on social distancing.

On March 12, Governor [Newsom](#) issued an [Executive Order](#) to respond to the emergency which recognized the authority of local public health officials to issue their own guidance.

Contra Costa's guidance is more far-reaching and restrictive than that issued by the State because the Bay Area is at the epicenter of the outbreak in California and we are seeing greater community spread of the virus than many other parts of the State.

**This afternoon, West Contra Costa Unified School District announced that all its schools will be closed from March 16 through April 3, with instruction through "Distance Learning" during the first two weeks.**

I've summarized below the details of the State and County Health guidelines regarding social distancing and "gatherings" as they apply in Contra Costa:

- Cancel or postpone large gatherings such as concerts, sporting events, celebrations, conventions, religious services and community events where 50 or more people are within arm's length of each other. (The State's guideline of cancelling events of 250 or more applies to other areas of California).
- Look for new larger venues, or cancel or postpone smaller gatherings of 50 or fewer people planned for spaces that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person.
- Cancel or postpone events for, or attended by, older adults (age 50 and above) and those with underlying medical conditions.

These guidelines **do not** apply to public transportation, airport travel, or shopping at a store/mall.

Those most at risk include:

- Those 50 years or older with the highest risk group being those 80 years and older
- People of any age who have underlying medical problems such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, or chronic lung disease, and those who are immunocompromised.

The [State has issued a number of detailed guidelines](#) for specific situations including for schools, food industry, child care and congregate care facilities and much more.

**Following these guidelines to reduce close contact of people have proven effective in prior pandemics in slowing transmission rates and reducing illness and death.**

By reducing the spread of COVID-19 we can:

- Reduce the number of people who contract COVID-19 before an effective treatment or vaccine is available
- Protect those most likely to experience severe symptoms (the elderly or those with underlying chronic conditions)
- Preserve and protect our health care system (which could become overwhelmed by an increasing number of individuals seeking medical care)
- Minimize the social and economic impacts of this new virus

As many medical experts have said, our efforts can "flatten the curve" so the infections grow more slowly and allow us time to successfully deal with this novel virus.



[contracosta.ca.gov/gjoia](http://contracosta.ca.gov/gjoia)

eUpdate - March 10, 2020

## **Contra Costa Declares Coronavirus Emergency**

### **Issues critical new guidelines to help prevent spread**

The Board of Supervisors today declared a state of emergency in Contra Costa County due to COVID-19.

In doing so, we join more than a dozen other California counties who have taken the same step.

#### **What does this mean?**

A county emergency proclamation is a prudent step that allows our Health Department to mobilize county resources, accelerate emergency planning, streamline staffing, access future reimbursement by the state and federal governments, and raise awareness about how we can help reduce the spread of the virus.

In addition, the Health Department released new guidelines for dealing with the virus. Many of these are called "social distancing" which is proven to reduce the spread of contagious viral disease.

These guidelines are not mandatory, but health officials strongly urge they are followed.

They include:

- High risk people (those over age 50 or with pre-existing chronic illness) should avoid mass gatherings such as parades, sporting events, religious services, celebrations and concerts where people are within arm's length of each other and there are 50 or more people.

- [Organizers should cancel or postpone large gatherings such as concerts, sporting events, celebrations, conventions, religious services and community events where 50 or more people are within arm's length of each other.](#)
- [More hand sanitizers in classrooms and workplaces](#)
- [Public, commercial transit should increase sanitizing](#)

[Full information on new guidelines.](#)

[Congregate \(group\) living facility new guidelines.](#)

[These new recommendations are on top of existing Health Department guidelines for the general public and at-risk people.](#)

[Remember, the majority of people who get COVID-19 do not get seriously ill. The virus is hardest on older adults and people with serious underlying medical conditions such as heart, lung, and kidney disease.](#)

[Prevention measures help protect everyone, especially the most vulnerable. We're all learning the best prevention steps: washing hands often, for 20 seconds; covering coughs and sneezes; staying home when sick. Check the CDC website for more details.](#)

[Our County's emergency proclamation will help us harness resources to mobilize prevention efforts and care for our residents who test positive.](#)

[The virus is impacting the capacity of health care facilities and causing shortages in some essential health care supplies. We are working with state and federal agencies to access sufficient supplies to ensure we can deal with the virus effectively.](#)

[While these are challenging times, I'm heartened by the prevention efforts I see in our communities. This is a time when working together benefits us all.](#)

[As we know, new information is coming out daily. There are several good ways to stay updated with information about the virus. This includes Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) website, the Contra Costa Health Services website, or the California Department of Public Health website.](#)

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eUpdate - March 18, 2020

## **Important to Remember to Take Care of Our Health**

**Walking, hiking, biking are allowed with social distance and especially good for us in stressful times!**

We are all under a lot of stress right now. I know I am.

Not only do we all need to adjust to spending most of our time inside, as well as remembering to practice virus prevention measures, but there's also the worry about getting sick, ourselves or our loved ones.

Add to this trying to understand the details of the [health order shut-down](#). (County Health Services has a helpful new COVID-19 hot line, **844-729-8410**, open during business hours, and [an FAQ](#) that's regularly updated.)

It's more important now to do all we can to take care of our health. Getting exercise, eating well, getting enough sleep all help our immune systems. They're also good for our mental health.

We've gotten a number of questions about whether, under the health order, we're allowed to go outside to exercise--walk, run or bike. The answer is yes!

The health order doesn't prevent outdoor exercise, as long as we practice social distancing. This means don't exercise in groups, and try to stay at least six feet from a walking or running partner. Also, exercising in gyms and playgrounds is not allowed.

We want to clarify that the [East Bay Regional Park District](#) trails are open to the public. The Park District says while bathrooms, visitor centers, drinking fountains, and other services are closed due to the health order, trails are open. We can all hike!

I've been enjoying daily walks along the San Francisco Bay Trail in Richmond. I encourage you to get a little fresh air exercise as often as you can, in whatever way you choose. It's one of the things that can help us stay healthy and get through this pandemic.

eUpdate - March 16, 2020

## **Bay Area Health Officers Order New, Major Steps to stop COVID-19 spread**

***Collective effort to help prevent healthcare systems from being overwhelmed***

Bay Area County Health Officers (Contra Costa, Alameda, San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Francisco, and Marin) have issued a [mandatory Health Order](#) directing people to shelter at home, except when providing or receiving essential services, or for essential travel.

This order directs most non-essential businesses to cease operations, starting at midnight tonight. It lasts until April 7, but may be extended.

**Who is an essential employee? What is an essential business? Details below and in the [Order](#).**

The Health Officers have taken these new steps to slow the spread of the highly contagious COVID-19 virus. Without this restrictive action, our healthcare systems may become overwhelmed.

While our hospitals are implementing their "surge" plans to handle significant increases in patients, their capacity is limited. As the virus infects more people, and epidemiological predictions say it will get worse before it gets better, healthcare systems face overload.

I know these measures are drastic and will impact millions of people in very challenging and stressful ways. The Health Officers strongly believe that if we don't take these steps now, our situation will become worse, with more serious illness and death.

We are advocating for our State and Federal governments to take emergency action to help vulnerable families financially impacted by these measures, such as assistance with basics--food and housing. This includes eviction protection.

Here are the main provisions of the Health Order:

**All residents should shelter at home and leave only for "essential activities" or "essential travel" which include:**

- Performing tasks essential to their family's health and safety, including their pets
- Obtaining necessary services/supplies, including groceries
- Engaging in outdoor activities without coming into close contact with others
- Performing work at an "essential business" (defined below) or to carry out activities permitted in the Health Order
- Obtaining services at any healthcare facility (including veterinary care but not gyms)
- Travel to obtain or deliver goods or services to households or other entities
- Travel to care for elderly, minors, dependents, persons with disabilities, or other vulnerable persons. Including pets.
- Travel to educational institutions to receive materials for distance learning or meals and other related services
- Travel related to providing or accessing services exempted in the order



**All non-essential businesses shall cease operation except to maintain "minimum basic operations". Essential businesses include:**

- Healthcare operations
- Grocery stores (including stores like Target that sell both grocery and non-grocery items)
- Pharmacies and healthcare supply stores
- Gas stations, auto supply and repair
- Banks and financial institutions
- Hardware stores, plumbers, electricians, exterminators and other services to maintain safety and sanitation and essential operations of homes and businesses
- Educational institutions for purposes of facilitating distance learning
- Laundromats and dry cleaners
- Restaurants and prepared food facilities, but only for delivery or carry out (no table service)
- Airlines, taxis, and other private transportation providers for essential activities
- Businesses that supply other businesses providing products or services exempted in the Health Order
- Shipping and mailing services including PO boxes
- Businesses that deliver goods and services directly to residences
- Childcare facilities to enable employees exempted in the Order to work
- 
- Essential governmental functions and essential infrastructure
- Newspapers, TV, and other media

Other important points:

- **All gatherings of any number are prohibited except** as needed to carry out essential activities, maintain operation of essential businesses, or for essential governmental functions.
- All first responders, law enforcement personnel and those performing essential governmental functions are exempt from the Order.
- This Order does not apply to the operations of Federal and State agencies, this includes airports.
- Public transit remains open to allow people to engage in "essential travel".
- Each local governmental entity shall identify which employees are needed to continue providing essential governmental functions.

Thanks to all of you for doing all we can to protect and help each other in this unprecedented time. We're all in this together.

More details about the guidelines [here](#).

More details about [COVID-19](#) here.

More details about [prevention](#).

[Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) information.](#)

eUpdate - March 12, 2020

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