

Homeless Services Provider Call

Notes from 4/09/20 call

- **Welcome** -Jessica
 - Good morning and thank you for participating on today's Homeless Service Providers Call
 - I hope you are doing well! I wish I could see your faces, of all the people doing incredible work
 - The first part of this call will be updates and information from a variety of people working to provide services and resources to persons experiencing homelessness
 - The second part of the call will be an opportunity for you to ask questions and share information on services you are providing

- **Public Health Update** - Matt
 - The County Health Services Agency website has a graphic report on COVID-19 cases (<http://santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/PublicHealth/CommunicableDiseasesControl/CoronavirusHome.aspx>)
 - As of yesterday, there were 76 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Santa Cruz County including:
 - 14 persons hospitalized
 - 1 death
 - 29 persons recovered
 - Our goal is to slow down the rate of infection, so the hospital system doesn't get overwhelmed.
 - There were 1,469 COVID-19 tests completed that were Negative
 - 36% of persons who had two chronic health conditions were hospitalized, 29% of persons with one chronic health condition were hospitalized, 9% of persons with no chronic health conditions were hospitalized
 - The gender balance of persons testing positively for COVID-19 is around 50-50
 - We are seeing persons testing positive for COVID-19 in all parts of the county
 - 27 in north county
 - 14 in south county

- 27 in mid-county
 - 17 under investigation
- There is a new Public Health Order that closes all parks for 1 week. Current understanding is that camping in the parks for the homeless is still allowed. Requests have been made for bathrooms for homeless persons to use.

- **Isolation Shelter (motel) Update - George**
 - As of Monday, the Isolation Shelters were accepting guests through referrals. The Isolation Shelter is currently at capacity for persons who are non-symptomatic and who are considered medically vulnerable, such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease).
 - Additional Isolation Shelter sites are being developed. A waitlist is being kept for future vacancies; so keep sending in referrals.

- **Supporting existing shelters update – Tatiana**
 - Continuing efforts to move all shelters to a Shelter in Place Model
 - Additional Policy Guidance is planned for release next week.
 - Starting next Monday, there will be a Weekly Shelter Brief on the COVID-19 Response. The purpose of the call is to provide important information to shelters and provide an opportunity for Q&A. Tatiana will host the call and provide updates on efforts to implement and support a Shelter in Place Model. The following people will also be on the call to provide info and answer questions related to shelters: Matt Nathanson from Public Health, Tom Stagg representing Expanded Shelters, and Monica Lippi, representing the Isolation and Quarantine Shelter. If you are a shelter provider and you have not received an invitation, please email HSCO@santacruzcounty.us to request to be added to that call.

- **Expanded Shelter update – Tom**
 - As of Friday, April 3, an expanded shelter was opened at the Vets Memorial Hall next to the Post Office in downtown Santa Cruz. There are currently 22 current participants who came from the Salvation Army Laurel Street Shelter to allow for social distancing. Staff is being ramped up, once there is full staffing coverage, the shelter will be able to serve more persons.
 - We are working to develop a single referral system for shelters across the County

- The next expanded shelter will be opened at the Watsonville Vets Memorial. No date is set yet but will be soon. The First intakes for the Watsonville Vets Memorial will be from the Watsonville Salvation Army shelter to allow for recommended social distancing.

- **Outreach to unsheltered persons – Matt**
 - We are working to increase outreach to persons who are unsheltered. We have started doing Homeless Outreach Service Sites (HOSS) a couple times a week in areas nearby to where persons are living unsheltered. At the sites people can get information, resources, use porta potties and hygiene facilities, and get screened for symptoms.
 - The first outreach site dry run was on Tuesday at Emeline. It will continue to be at this location Tuesday and Friday mornings.
 - Not intended to be a place for people from around the county to come in congregate; rather a means to serve people already in the areas because they are using the Janus clinic, County benefits office or health services, or living in the area.
 - The next HOSS will be Watsonville, on Wednesday morning. The exact location is still being determined.
 - Once we get resources, the plan is support existing sites such as St. Francis Soup Kitchen, Loaves and Fishes, and Footbridge Services. We hope to be able to provide the sites with tents, sleeping bags, and hygiene products to be distributed.
 - For people on the call who are doing outreach, think about what you need to continue doing your work and serve unsheltered persons and let Matt know (Matthew.Nathanson@santacruzcounty.us)

- **Other Jurisdictional Supports to COVID-19 Homeless Response –**
 - Susie, City of Santa Cruz
 - Introduced Brooke who started Monday as the new Homeless Response Manager
 - The City of Santa Cruz is working closely with the County to support its homeless responses efforts.
 - A National Guard barracks tent is going up at the Armory to provide day services for persons experiencing homelessness. Will be setting up a service model next week as resources become available.
 - The National Guard has also provided an 8-unit shower trailer at the armory

- With the park closures, they are hoping to have porta potties to replace the closed park bathrooms.
- Working on permitting volunteer food distribution. Moving from a congregate to distributed food model. Providers are already moving in this direction.
- They are here to support the County and providers.
- If you have questions for the City of Santa Cruz contact Susie at sohara@cityofsantacruz.com or Brooke at bnewman@cityofsantacruz.com
- Adriana, City of Watsonville
 - The City of Watsonville is also working closely with the County to support COVID-19 homeless response efforts.
 - In support of the new Public Health Order, the City has closed parks and trails as of today.
 - Working on social distancing, getting food and information out to older adult community
 - City staff are helping with food distribution at Second Harvest Food Bank and helping with mutual aid requests
- **Question and Answer**
 - Joseph, AFC – how many motels/hotels are in place right now for isolation? How many rooms will be available?
 - Elissa – right now the County has master leased one hotel site with 28 rooms, many of which have more than one bed. Working towards getting enough hotels to have 100 more rooms for prioritized populations (persons who are considered medically vulnerable) in the next week to a week and a half, with staffing. This will give us 125 – 130 rooms total; we will go from there.
 - Meg, TAY at Encompass –the TAY Resource Center is still providing services. They have some housing options for persons who are extremely vulnerable or experiencing domestic violence. The Resource Center also has shower available. Please contact 831-713-6131 for more information.
 - Debbie, AFC rotating shelter, is working towards having two 24/7 sites that don't have to rotate. Would like to move to 25 beds at each site. Contact for AFC's shelter is 831-332-8151.
 - Darrie, Homeless Garden Project
 - In the shelter-in-place model, are clients allowed to leave for essential needs?

- Tom – clients are allowed to leave the shelter for essential needs. We let the client determine what an essential need is for them. We provide them with information on social distancing recommendations and encourage them to follow them. There is a screening process when clients return to shelter including taking their temperature and asking questions about coughing and difficulty breathing.
- One of Darrie’s clients thinks her Voucher process is on hold because the Housing Authority requires a face-to-face meeting. Is that true?
 - Jessica – **Revised information** please go to the Housing Authority website for updated information on their current services:
<https://www.hacosantacruz.org/>
- Thank you everyone for being on this call! We will be sending out the notes today or tomorrow. The notes will also be posted on the Human Services Department’s website at <https://www.santacruzhumanservices.org/Home/COVID-19HomelessServicesInformation>
- If you have any questions that weren’t answered, think of anything else you want information on, or want to share available resources or services, please send me an e-mail at jessica.scheiner@santacruzcounty.us
- Our next call will be Thursday at 10:00.