

LOCAL NEWS • News

Lifting coronavirus order brings relief, anxiety to Inland businesses, residents



Customers enjoy dinner and drinks outside at 1909, a restaurant and bar along Old Town Front Street in Temecula on Friday, Dec. 11, 2020. The state's stay-at-home order, which was lifted Monday, Jan. 25, 2021, barred outdoor dining in Southern California. The eatery's owner did not return a call seeking comment. (File photo by Terry Pierson, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **RYAN HAGEN** | rhagen@scng.com and **BEAU YARBROUGH** | byarbrough@scng.com | The Sun

PUBLISHED: January 25, 2021 at 4:40 p.m. | UPDATED: January 25, 2021 at 6:27 p.m.

Many Inland businesses and officials reacted with relief to the loosening of [coronavirus](#) restrictions announced Monday, Jan. 25, but others worried about the disease's continued spread.



Echoing remarks Gov. Gavin Newsom made as he [announced](#) Monday that the statewide stay-at-home order would be replaced by the restrictions in place before December, Curt Hagman, chairman of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, said that at last there was light at the end of the tunnel.

“But it’s a very long tunnel,” Hagman said, adding he was concerned the restrictions might have permanently shuttered many businesses.

“Everything has consequences, and this shutdown had serious economic consequences for the county – and for the state, I’m sure,” he said. “I’m very nervous about the businesses we lost during the shutdowns that might never open again.”

Many businesses had [remained open](#) despite the orders.

Tammy Rapp, who owns the horror-themed Little Shop of Hairdos salon in downtown Upland, said she didn’t know of a single hair salon that closed.

“We knew that we weren’t the cause of the surge,” Rapp said, saying officials had never presented data showing salons were responsible for the sharp increase in cases, hospitalizations and deaths that began in November.

Rapp said she put up curtains to block people from seeing activity in the salon and hired an extra cleaning crew to ensure the shop was safe and clean.

During the shutdown, people would message her “like we were a speakeasy,” but she received calls from clients Monday morning, Rapp said.

San Bernardino County officials had [argued in a lawsuit](#) challenging the governor’s actions that closing so many businesses only encouraged people to meet illegally, while hurting businesses. The California Supreme Court [refused to hear the case](#).

Hagman said the county would allow businesses as much leeway as the state allowed. Los Angeles County, which earlier had imposed stricter rules than the state, said Monday that it would [allow outdoor dining](#).

Many businesses did not survive the shutdowns and other effects of the coronavirus, said Cindy Roth, president and CEO of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce.

“For our businesses, this is a win,” Roth said. “We wish it had been sooner, but we understand the concerns with the coronavirus.”

Roth said she and others will work to help businesses, advocating for more grants and helping them apply for grants, but some will never reopen.



“There will be new ones that come forward, but it’s very difficult for families that have spent their life savings as an entrepreneur, on a small business, and it’s gone,” she said.

Dr. Troy Pennington, who works in the emergency department at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center in Colton, said he wants people to remain cautious, as 1,400 people remain in San Bernardino County hospitals because of COVID-19.

“I look forward to us being able to open up, but I still have some concerns,” Pennington said. “People need to understand that it’s still a huge drain on our healthcare system, especially in San Bernardino County.”

Officials could do a better job of seeing which areas are highest risk and concentrating on those, he said.

“We haven’t done a great job of using the science to guide who we’re closing and who we’re allowing to stay open,” he said.

Some residents weren’t sure opening more businesses was worth the risk.

“Vaccination levels are still low, and opening up before tier 1 is done getting vaccinated is just asking for a new surge before we deploy the vaccines to the most vulnerable population,” said Daniel Moussatche, an attorney who lives in Corona and works in Riverside. “With the Super Bowl coming up we are going to get a new surge in cases like the Thanksgiving surge.”

Moussatche said he got COVID-19 from work in December and was “down” for about three weeks, although he didn’t need hospitalization.

Riverside County encouraged all residents to wear masks, avoid crowds and get tested to see if they have coronavirus. Appointments can be made at [GetTested.ruhealth.org](https://www.gettested.ruhealth.org) in Riverside County or <https://sbcovid19.com> in San Bernardino County.

“So many of our small businesses that have shouldered significant burden throughout this pandemic can now refocus on their recovery,” Karen Spiegel, chairwoman of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, said in a written statement.

Linda Sherman-Nurick, the owner of Cellar Door Bookstore in Riverside, said she wasn’t sure how she feels about the lifting of the order.

The shop has switched to online orders during the pandemic and is doing OK, she said.



In summer, she allowed five people to enter at a time, in “very controlled circumstances,” and saw people try to come in without masks. She said she didn’t want to argue but wouldn’t allow them in, and that safety is her priority.

“If one of my staff got sick and I died, I’d have to live with that the rest of my life,” she said.

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Ryan Hagen covers San Bernardino County and politics for the Southern California News Group. Since he began covering Inland Empire governments in 2010, he's written about a city entering bankruptcy and exiting bankruptcy; politicians being elected, recalled and arrested; crime; a terrorist attack; fires; ICE; fights to end homelessness; fights over the location of speed bumps; and people's best and worst moments. A graduate of Pepperdine University, he teaches journalism classes at Cal State San Bernardino. His greatest accomplishment is breaking a coffee addiction. His greatest regret is any moment without coffee.

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THINGS TO DO > RESTAURANTS FOOD AND DRINK • News

Inland Empire restaurants react to lifting of ban on outdoor dining



Paulies Dubeck, owner of Paulie's Pizza Pub in downtown Upland, rearranges his outdoor dining on Monday. (Photo by Watchara Phomicinda, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **FIELDING BUCK** | fbuck@scng.com and **ALEX GROVES** | agroves@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

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Inland restaurants, breweries and wineries are trying to figure out how quickly they can resume patio service after [California lifted stay-at-home orders](#) on Monday, Jan. 25.

Business owners responded with relief to the news that they can return to in-person dining outdoors, which has been banned since early December in an attempt to halt a surge of the [novel coronavirus](#).

“It would make all the difference in the world,” said Paul Dubeck, owner of Paulie’s Pizza Pub in Upland. “We’re struggling now. We’re trying to stay afloat.”

But Dubeck doesn’t know where he will set up.

His restaurant is on Second Street, which had been closed for several months to automobiles so that [eateries could set up there](#). But the [City Council voted to reopen the street](#) as of this week and told the restaurants to clear out. Dubeck was moving chairs and tables when reached for a phone interview Monday morning, but the city had not yet taken down the barriers.

Upland officials are looking for ways to help Second Street businesses operate outdoors in light of the state’s action on Monday.

If he has to vacate the street, Dubeck said he might put a couple of tables on the sidewalk or in a parking lot if the city allows it.

California has returned to its color-coded, four-tier system of reopening, which December’s shutdown superseded. Both Riverside and San Bernardino counties are in the purple tier, which allows outdoor in-person dining but not indoor dining. [Riverside County was in the red tier](#), which allowed limited indoor dining, in September, but [fell back into the purple tier](#) in mid-October. San Bernardino [never got out of the purple tier](#) and has been denied indoor dining since July.

In both counties, businesses that allowed in-person dining that customers reported to health officials have been investigated and provided with education on meeting state COVID-19 guidelines [rather than discipline](#).

Heavily hit Los Angeles County is also [allowing outdoor dining](#). It also never advanced beyond the purple tier, and some businesses in the eastern San Gabriel Valley have felt it is [unfair to face the same restrictions](#) with fewer COVID-19 cases.

Want to know how current effects are affecting Inland dining? Sign up for our weekly food newsletter The Eat Index and find out about the latest restaurant and brewery happenings in the Inland Empire. [Subscribe here](#).



News of the outdoor dining ban being lifted came on a wet and chilly morning and the weather could impact how quickly some businesses are able to get operations up and running.

“It’s windy and cold and off and on rain over the next few days, so that limits us because of how much outdoor space we have and how much is covered,” said Jim Hart, winemaker for Hart Winery in Temecula.

He said his winery will observe safety measures when it reopens.

“We’re obviously cognizant of the seriousness of this health situation, so we’re trying to be as mindful of that as possible so we make sure that our customers and our employees stay healthy,” Hart said.

California’s latest shutdown began Dec. 6, leaving many business owners feeling as if they’d been deprived of their last lifeline with the ban on outdoor dining.

“To say we are excited about the reopening of on-premise outdoor dining would be an understatement,” Mike Colonna, chief executive officer of Norms Restaurants, wrote in an email.

The Bellflower-based chain of full-service restaurants, which has Inland locations in Claremont and Riverside and is known for its discount steak breakfasts, was quick to supply itself with tents and outdoor tables when Gov. Gavin Newsom shut down indoor dining rooms at the end of June.

Black Angus Steakhouse responded to the most recent shutdown by temporarily closing most of its Southern California locations, including Ontario, San Bernardino and Temecula. On Monday, the Sherman Oaks chain issued a statement saying it would begin a “swift and steady reopening” of its California locations.

The first order of business for Lucille’s Smokehouse Bar-B-Que is to bring back furloughed staff members, according to Brad Hofman, president of Hofman Hospitality Group, which owns it. He said in an email that outdoor dining will reopen as soon as possible.

The lifting of the stay-at-home order surprised some businesses, including Jared Caperton, owner of [Chubby Cheeks Meadery in Temecula](#). He plans to reopen the meadery for outdoor dining and drinking. Caperton said that during the stay-at-home order his business had been selling bottles and food to-go and that he had also been doing some free deliveries in the local area.

“We have a pretty loyal customer base so thankfully they kept us afloat for the time being,” Caperton said.



He said that Chubby Cheeks had also taken advantage of the downtime to do upgrades to the meadery, both during the first stay-at-home order that started in March as well as the more recent one.

Though Caperton has made the most of the downtime, he said he'll be glad to offer some level of on-site service.

"I'm a small business owner in an industry that's getting shut down. It's difficult," he said.

Lance Sterling, owner of the Canyon Montclair and other supper clubs, had been doing parking lot concerts as a way of supporting his staff but suspended them and began [auctioning off his own autographed guitars](#) to keep going.

"Our goal is to get up and running and bring music back to the areas that we serve. Whether that takes a month, six months, or 10 years, I have it as my mission to repair all the damage that the close-down has created," he wrote in an email Monday.

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LOCAL NEWS • News

San Bernardino County clears some of its coronavirus death, testing data backlog

In four days, the county doubled the number of COVID-19 deaths reported since the start of January

By **BEAU YARBROUGH** | byarbrough@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise

PUBLISHED: January 25, 2021 at 3:25 p.m. | UPDATED: January 25, 2021 at 5:56 p.m.

After six days of reporting no new [coronavirus](#) deaths, San Bernardino County has at least partially cleared its [logjam of death certificates](#).

“Due to a backlog of deaths that occurred between 12/15 and 1/7 being reported in bulk, death counts are expected to increase by a large amount over the next week as they are processed and included in the dashboard data,” a message posted Saturday to the [county dashboard website](#) reads in part.

On Thursday, Jan. 21, the county recorded a coronavirus death for the first time in six days. That was followed by 18 fatalities reported Friday, Jan. 22, 15 on Saturday, Jan. 23, and — in what would be a record if it wasn't a bookkeeping issue — 73 more deaths Sunday, Jan. 24. Another 11 COVID-19 deaths were recorded Monday, Jan 25.

The county reported 116 deaths between Jan. 1 and 21, and 117 deaths between Jan. 22 and 25 — doubling all the deaths reported since the start of the year in just four days.

In all, there have been 1,678 coronavirus deaths in the county.



[COVID-19 has killed more than 400,000 Americans](#) since the pandemic began, more than 11 times the average number of flu deaths in the country, [according to the Centers for Disease Control](#).

On Jan. 21, another 1,571 cases of COVID-19 were reported, bringing San Bernardino County's total to 266,028. Another 2,682 are considered to have recovered from the disease as of Jan. 21, bringing the total to 251,316.

The deaths data isn't the only apparent backlog in the system, On Saturday, the county reported 259,553 new coronavirus tests taken, followed by no new tests being taken at all on Sunday or Monday, leaving the county with a total of 2.3 million tests taken since the pandemic began.

The surge in new testing data appears to come from a backlog at the state level.

"The county's data team has been in touch with the state's data team since Saturday afternoon trying to get this squared away," San Bernardino County spokesman David Wert wrote in an email Monday. "Test data comes from the state. We just share what gets posted in the state database for our county."

Here are the latest numbers, according to county and state public health officials.

San Bernardino County

Confirmed cases: 266,028 total, up 4,829 from Friday, averaging 1,705 reported per day in the past week

Deaths: 1,678 total, up 99 from Friday, averaging 16.9 reported per day in the past week

Hospital survey: 1,274 confirmed and 69 suspected patients hospitalized Sunday, including 297 confirmed and six suspected patients in the ICU, with 24 of 25 facilities reporting. The number of confirmed patients is down 15.7% from a week earlier.

People tested: 2,332,393 total, up 259,553 from Friday, averaging 44,861 reported per day in the past week

Resolved cases (estimate): 251,316 total, up 9,235 from Friday, averaging 2,841 per day in the past week

Vaccinations: 75,900 first doses received and 38,770 first doses administered as of Friday, Jan. 15

Metrics tracked by the state:



- ICU availability: 0.0% across Southern California
- New cases per day per 100,000 residents: 155.0
- Case rate adjusted for testing volume: 77.5
- Test positivity rate: 20.4% (22.4% in socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods)
- Risk level/reopening tier: Widespread/purple tier; many nonessential indoor business operations are closed
- What's next: To advance to the red tier and reopen more businesses, San Bernardino County would need an adjusted case rate of 7.0 or below and a positivity rate below 8.0% for two consecutive weeks.

To see a map and list of cases, deaths and per-capita rates by community, click [here](#).

Here is a look at how the county's numbers have changed each day:

Staff writer Nikie Johnson contributed to this report.

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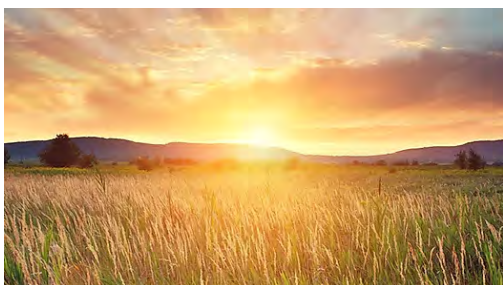
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By Federated Hermes



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DAILY PRESS

HEALTH

San Bernardino County reports 1,571 new coronavirus cases, 11 additional deaths Monday

Laine Henry Palm Springs Desert Sun

Published 2:01 p.m. PT Jan. 25, 2021 | Updated 2:01 p.m. PT Jan. 25, 2021

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in San Bernardino County increased by 1,571 Monday, and 11 new virus-related deaths were reported.

The county's death toll has risen to 1,678. Since the pandemic began, San Bernardino County has confirmed 266,028 COVID-19 cases, as of Monday's data.

On its data dashboard, the county said on Sunday: "Due to a backlog of deaths that occurred between 12/15 and 1/7 being reported in bulk, death counts are expected to increase by a large amount over the next week as they are processed and included in the dashboard data. Due to issues with the state's reporting system, laboratory results may also be inaccurate. Data is being verified with the state and will be updated once it is clarified."

San Bernardino County, which is the state's fifth-most populous county with 2.2 million people, has the second-highest case rate in California. Los Angeles County, the nation's most populous county with about 10 million people, leads the state with more than 1 million reported cases.

Currently, the county's adjusted daily case rate is 61.2 per 100,000 residents, which places it in the most-restrictive "purple" tier now after the state's stay-at-home order was lifted Monday.

For the county to move to the red tier, that case rate must be at 7 or less.

In a news release Monday, the county said the state lifted the stay-at-home order when it calculated the four-week ICU capacity projection for the Southern California Region at 30.8%, which is above the 15% that triggered the order. ICU capacity in the county has stood

at zero for several weeks as holiday gatherings caused case rates and hospitalizations to soar, but regional ICU capacity has improved to 14.4%.

Active cases: San Bernardino County's total number of known, active coronavirus cases is 13,034. This number is derived by subtracting deaths (1,678) and recoveries (251,316) from the current confirmed case total (266,028).

Vaccines: Health officials began vaccinating county residents on Dec. 16. The county has received 119,525 total doses and fully immunized 61,168 people, a county spokesman said last week. This number accounts for about 2.8% of the county's total population.

Hospitalizations: As of Friday, the most recent update available, there were 1,277 confirmed COVID-19 patients in San Bernardino County hospitals. That's 64 fewer patients than the previous day. Of those, 289 were being cared for in intensive care units — 24 less than the previous day.

Patients with confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 are occupying about 52.5% of the county's ICU beds as of Saturday's figures. The county also reported that it had 140 ICU beds available as of Friday, 18 more than the day before.

Where are the COVID-19 cases?

As of Monday, here is a list of confirmed cases and deaths in the high desert, with increases from Sunday's tally in parentheses:

- Adelanto:** 4,957 cases (+33), 31 deaths
- Apple Valley:** 8,489 cases (+47), 74 deaths (+1)
- Baker:** 41 cases (+2)
- Barstow:** 3,184 cases (+14), 23 deaths
- Daggett:** 17 cases
- Helendale:** 461 cases (+2), 3 deaths
- Hesperia:** 12,611 cases (+84), 68 deaths (+1)
- Hinkley:** 51 cases, 1 death
- Joshua Tree:** 285 cases (+3), 6 deaths
- Landers:** 53 cases, 1 death
- Lucerne Valley:** 318 cases, 4 deaths
- Morongo Valley:** 149 cases (+2), 1 death
- Needles:** 284 cases (+4), 3 deaths

Newberry Springs: 111 cases
Oak Hills: 1,349 cases (+9), 2 deaths
Oro Grande: 125 cases (+6), 1 death
Phelan: 1,453 cases (+11), 5 deaths
Piñon Hills: 360 cases (+2), 2 deaths
Pioneertown: 9 cases
Trona: 34 cases
Twentynine Palms: 856 cases (+19), 2 deaths
Victorville: 18,959 cases (+94), 105 deaths (+2)
Yermo: 76 cases, 1 death
Yucca Valley: 1,217 cases (+19), 26 deaths

Here is Monday's list of cases and deaths in the mountain communities, with increases from Sunday's tally in parentheses:

Angelus Oaks: 36 cases
Big Bear City: 482 cases (+4), 1 death
Big Bear Lake: 318 cases (+7)
Blue Jay: 127 cases (+1), 2 deaths
Cedar Glen: 7 cases
Crestline: 551 cases (+3), 3 deaths
Fawnskin: 15 cases (+2)
Forest Falls: 35 cases
Lake Arrowhead: 392 cases, 1 death
Rimforest: 39 cases (+2)
Running Springs: 240 cases (+5)
Sugarloaf: 80 (+1) cases, 1 death
Twin Peaks: 116 cases, 1 death
Wrightwood: 300 cases (+7), 3 deaths

California: 3,136,158 cases (+27,007), 37,118 deaths (+328) as of Monday. Vaccine doses shipped to local health departments and health care systems: 4,564,425. Doses administered: 2,437,504. That's 53.4% of the total shipped.

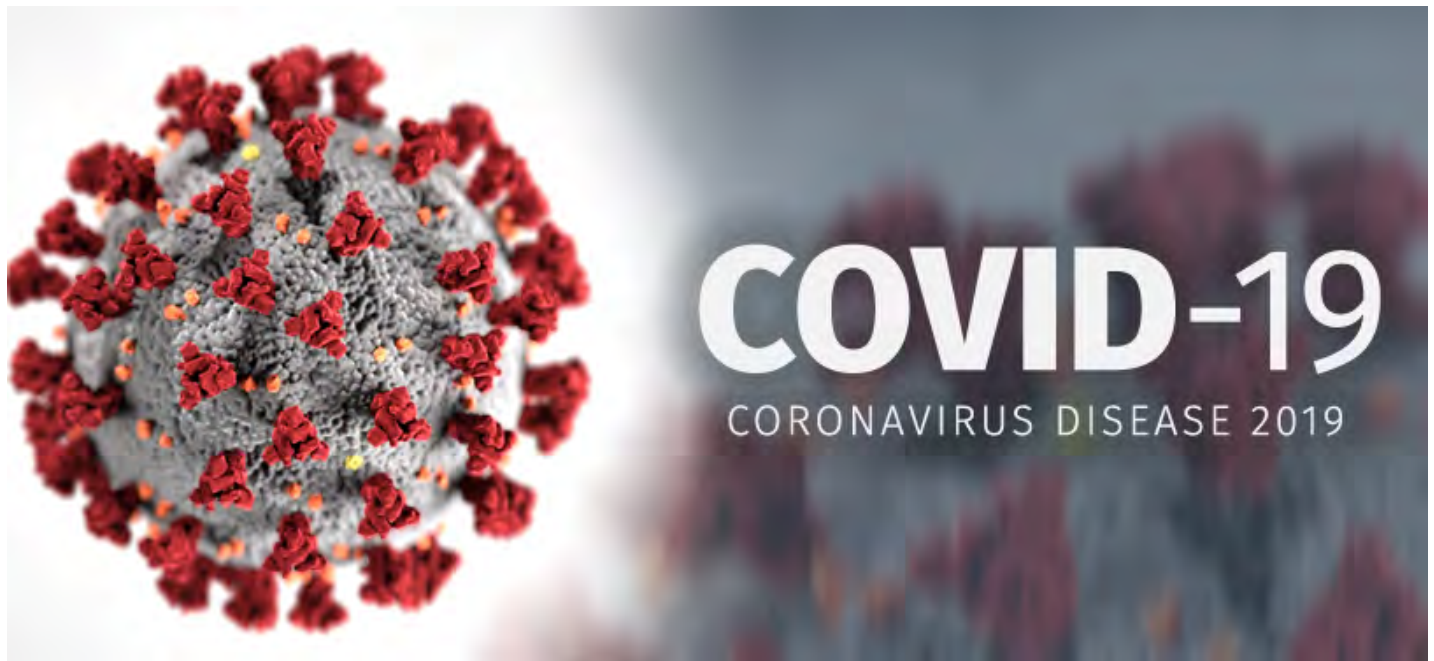
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https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/update-eight-more-fontana-residents-have-died-from-coronavirus-county-says-on-jan-24/article_ce5ea3b4-5c3b-11eb-801e-13f02a4fde38.html

FEATURED

UPDATE: Eight more Fontana residents have died from coronavirus, county says on Jan. 24

Jan 21, 2021



There have been 35,532 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and 182 deaths in Fontana as of Jan. 24, health officials said.

Eight more Fontana residents have died from the coronavirus, according to a report by the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health on Jan. 24.

A total of 182 persons from Fontana have died due to COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic in early 2020.

County officials said there had been a backlog in reporting of COVID-19 deaths earlier in January, which explained the sudden increase in recent days.

There have been 35,532 confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Fontana as of Jan. 24.

Overall in San Bernardino County, there have been 264,457 cases and 1,667 deaths.



Health officials, worried about the rise in infections during the past two months, continue to plead with residents to follow the oft-repeated health guidelines and comply with the resulting stay-at-home orders which have been implemented by the state.

"As COVID-19 continues its spread, we all must remain vigilant," the county said in a statement. "The changes we have had to make to routines and daily life are extremely hard, but we must stop the spread with all the steps we have learned over the last year -- wearing a mask; distancing; washing our hands and getting tested."

There are two testing sites available on weekdays in Fontana: Jack Bulik Center, 16581 Filbert Street, and the Jessie Turner Center, 15556 Summit Avenue.

Testing is free and does not require insurance. Testing is available by appointment only by visiting [sbcovid19.com](https://www.sbcovid19.com).





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CALIFORNIA

Limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine likely to slow rocky rollout for California seniors



Dr. Richard Dang, right, assistant professor at the USC School of Pharmacy, prepares a COVID-19 vaccine Friday as mass vaccination of healthcare workers starts at Dodger Stadium. (Irfan Khan / Los Angeles Times)

By LAURA J. NELSON, HAYLEY SMITH, MAYA LAU

JAN. 16, 2021 | 6 AM UPDATED 8:04 AM



As California launches massive COVID-19 vaccination sites to speed up inoculations, concern is growing among public health officials that the supply of doses could soon dry up.

State and local officials Friday complained that the scramble touched off by the federal government's recommendation to add people 65 and older to vaccine eligibility lists has not been accompanied by an increase in shipments.

That could add to an already confusing and chaotic vaccine rollout, and limit the number of people who can be vaccinated in California, just as the state seems to be gaining ground.

California has administered nearly 1.2 million vaccines, or about 40% of the 3 million doses received, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Friday. That's a significant increase since Monday, when the state had administered about 783,000 doses, less than one-third of the 2.5 million doses on hand.

But Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said Friday that some pharmacies that would have received more vaccine shipments this week have to wait a week, "because the national supply simply isn't coming." Jeff Gorell, a deputy mayor, said Thursday that the city would receive 46,000 doses for their vaccination sites over the next few days, but that city officials "don't know what the world looks like after Wednesday."

"It's not a problem with the state, it's not a problem here locally," Garcetti said. "We simply don't have the supply coming in."

U.S. governors said they had been expecting a sharp uptick in vaccine shipments, based on assurances from Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and Operation Warp Speed, the Trump administration initiative to marshal vaccines en masse. Instead, Newsom said Friday, officials "have "reneged on that, or for whatever reason are unable to deliver."

Trump administration officials had assured U.S. governors that they would soon release doses from a stockpile of vaccines as a way to help states ramp up their vaccination efforts. [The Washington Post reported](#) Friday that the stockpile is already depleted, and that states will not receive additional shipments, slowing vaccination programs across the country.

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By Thrivent Asset Management

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A spokesperson for HHS did not return a request for comment.

President-elect Joe Biden echoed those concerns, [criticizing the U.S. vaccine rollout](#) Friday as “a dismal failure thus far.”

A lack of clear information from the White House means state and local officials have been unable to make proper plans because they don't know how many doses they can expect or when they can expect them, Biden said. He said there were “tens of millions of doses” sitting unused in freezers.

Biden said his goal is for the U.S. to administer 100 million vaccines during his first 100 days in office, including at federally supported community vaccination centers and mobile clinics.

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That type of effort will require a massive and reliable flow of doses, and clear communication with local officials who are trying to determine how many appointments to schedule.

Los Angeles County officials estimate that by next week, they will be able to administer more than 40,000 doses per day at vaccination sites that include [Dodger Stadium](#), five mega-sites run by the county — including [Six Flags Magic Mountain](#) and the Pomona Fairplex — and a handful of smaller city clinics.

Newsom's handling of the rollout has drawn criticism too, [including his announcement](#) that people 65 or older would be prioritized for vaccinations — creating [mass confusion](#) in counties where officials were not ready to administer the shots.

Officials have been inundated with calls from residents 65 and older who want the vaccine, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger said. But the county will not begin the next round of shots until healthcare workers are vaccinated.

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The county is not hoarding doses, Barger said, but needs a promise from the state and federal governments that enough doses will arrive to keep vaccination sites running smoothly.

“People are scared,” Barger said. “That’s really the takeaway I’m getting from people who are calling. People are frightened.”

Last week, Newsom sent a letter with governors of seven other states — including New York, Illinois and Michigan — to Azar and the head of Operation Warp Speed demanding that the federal government release doses from a federal stockpile so states could accelerate their vaccinations.

This week during a phone call with Azar and Vice President Mike Pence, governors were told that those doses would soon arrive, Newsom said. Health officials began planning for a surge in supply — which now does not appear to be coming, he said.

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The Biden administration has promised to provide more transparency on when doses will arrive, Newsom said, which “helps us with our planning purpose. It allows quicker and more efficient throughput, more capacity.”

Public officials across the U.S. have grown increasingly vocal in their criticisms of the Trump administration, saying the recommendation to vaccinate the elderly would lead to shortages unless more doses are released.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a Friday radio interview that the city had vaccinated 125,000 people in four days, but has been receiving a “very paltry” shipment of 100,000 doses per week from the federal government. The city will run out of vaccine next week unless the shipments increase, he said.

One of New York’s largest hospitals, the Mt. Sinai Health System, canceled vaccination appointments this week because they did not have enough doses.

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“There is not enough supply of vaccine to keep up with the first appointments, let alone the second appointments,” de Blasio said.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown [said on Twitter](#) that states will not be receiving increased shipments from the national stockpile next week, as previously promised, “because there is no federal reserve of doses.”

Vaccine manufacturers, meanwhile, say production is keeping up. Pfizer stated Friday that they are prepared to release millions of doses each day.

“Pfizer is confident in our ability to deliver 200 million doses of our vaccine to the U.S. government by July 31st,” Pfizer spokeswoman Jerica Pitts said via email.

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In Santa Clara County, officials have struggled to determine what the vaccine providers in their own county are doing, or how much they have on hand, county counsel James Williams said.

Some vaccine providers, like CVS, are getting their vaccine shipments directly from the federal government, Williams said. The state distributes some doses to entities operating in multiple counties, including Kaiser hospitals and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, a major medical group in the Bay Area.

Those entities are responsible for vaccinating the majority of Santa Clara County, but the county doesn't know exactly what they're doing, Williams said.

"We have less information than you do," said Dr. Howard Mandel, president of the L.A. City Health Commission, which acts as an advisory board to the City Council and mayor. A lack of communication coming down from the county is making it difficult for the commission to do its job, and repeated requests for updates and information often go unanswered, he said.

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The vaccination pipeline starts at the national level, where federal officials apportion doses for each state, said Dr. Mark Ghaly, California's Health and Human Services secretary. Then states allocate doses to counties, local health authorities and other entities like hospitals and prison systems— and then doses are allocated to providers like pharmacies and clinics.

Garcetti and three dozen other big-city mayors are pushing for less red tape and more local control. In a letter this week, [the mayors urged Biden](#) to release doses directly to cities, saying: "There is a need to be nimble and fill gaps that are unique to each local area."

Vaccine distributors said they're ready to deliver more doses, but that they are beholden to government rules for allocation.

Kaiser Permanente of Southern California has been "preparing for the expansion of eligibility" to include people 65 and older, but making that happen "depends on getting access to adequate supplies of vaccine, which we understand is coming," said Dr. Nancy Gin, regional director of quality and clinical analysis.

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The Albertsons supermarket chain, which will be administering vaccines at its retail pharmacies, said it is training more than 500 pharmacy technicians to assist with inoculations, and that vaccines are "moving out the door" as soon as they come in.

"The regulating factor really is the number of vaccines being allocated to us," Albertsons pharmacy manager Willem Henning said. "If we received more vaccines, we could probably do several hundred more each week."

Times staff writers Jaclyn Cosgrove and Colleen Shalby contributed to this report.

CALIFORNIA

COVID-19 VACCINES



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Laura J. Nelson

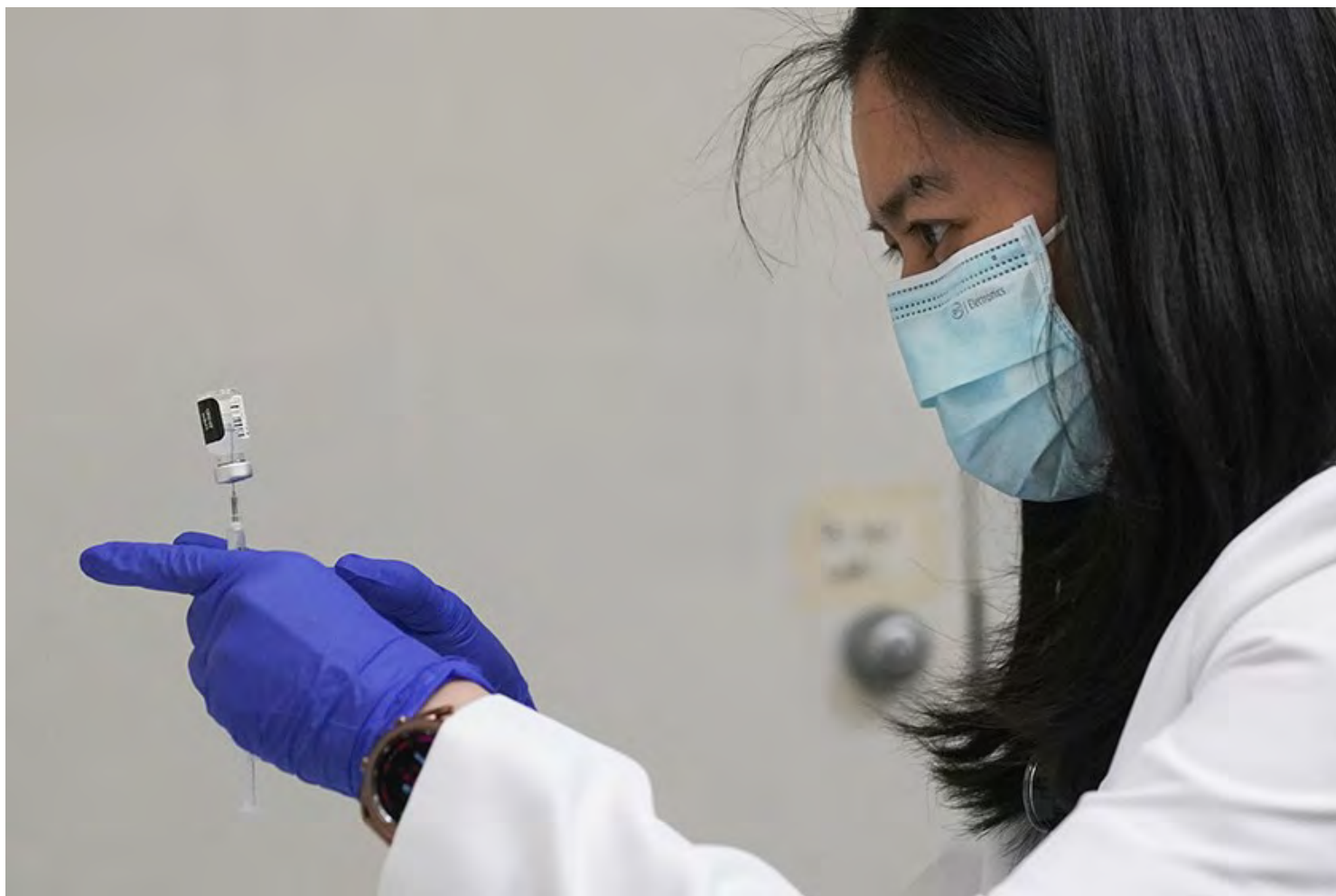
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CALIFORNIA

California will prioritize COVID-19 vaccine by age, not occupation, in next rounds



Pharmacist Marie Antonette Tambot prepares Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccinations for healthcare workers at Seton Medical Center in Daly City, Calif. (Associated Press)

By COLLEEN SHALBY, MELODY GUTIERREZ

JAN. 25, 2021 | 7:38 PM



In a significant reshuffling of vaccine eligibility guidelines, California officials said Monday they will be shifting who is prioritized in the next round of COVID-19 inoculations to focus on age rather than specific occupations considered higher risk.

The modifications announced Monday by Gov. Gavin Newsom leave unchanged the current priority list, which focuses on healthcare workers and residents 65 and older before expanding to teachers, farmworkers and first responders.

But there will be shift in who gets the vaccine after them. Under the original plan's tier structure, Tier 2 workers in manufacturing, transportation and commercial and

residential settings along with incarcerated people and the homeless would be prioritized.

Under the new plan, the next priority would be people under 65 years old. No details about the criteria were released Monday, but they could end up focusing on people over 50 first.

The move comes as California still is struggling to get enough vaccine to meet demand. Last week, state officials said it could take until June to get vaccinations to all those 65 and older. Los Angeles County estimated all residents might not be vaccinated until 2022 unless more supply becomes available.

“We realize we have got to increase throughput here and while we are proud of the framework we put out ... we recognize that it has advantages and disadvantages as it relates to speed and efficiency,” Newsom said.

The topic of changing eligibility is one that has regularly come up during the state’s vaccine advisory committee meetings. Last week, some members raised concerns that individuals who suffer from chronic illnesses and disabilities were being left behind in the current rollout plan.

“From our perspective, if we wait until May to get to other populations, a lot of people under 65 are going to die unnecessarily,” Andy Imparato of Disability Rights California said during Wednesday’s meeting.



PAID CONTENT

This Is What Kids Are Really Learning in Lockdown [Watch] [↗](#)

By California Milk Processing Board

The Glass Half Full News team report on how to survive in the wild, and on what kids have been learning at home.

The state has so far administered more than 2.4 million vaccine doses and more than 4.5 million doses have been shipped to health providers. Currently, state and county officials have said there is [not enough vaccine supply](#) to match goals to vaccinate the masses.

State epidemiologist [Dr. Erica Pan said last week](#) that the state is receiving 300,000 to 500,000 doses each week. In Los Angeles County, 500,000 doses would be needed per week in order to vaccinate all adults by mid-summer, chief science officer Dr. Paul Simon said Friday. But at the rate that current allocation is going, efforts would continue well into 2022.

Bob Schoonover, president of Service Employees International Union California, said the shift to age-based decisions over occupational risks in the next tier runs counter to research that shows workplaces are a major source of the spread.

“Millions of working Californians, most of them people of color, have no choice but to leave their homes and work each day, exposing themselves, their families, and their communities to COVID-19 and its devastation,” Schoonover said in a statement.



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CALIFORNIA

What the changes in the California vaccine priority list mean to you



COVID-19 vaccines are administered at the Forum in Inglewood on Jan. 19. (Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

By COLLEEN SHALBY, HOWARD BLUME, MELODY GUTIERREZ, LUKE MONEY, SARA CARDINE

JAN. 26, 2021 | 9:25 AM



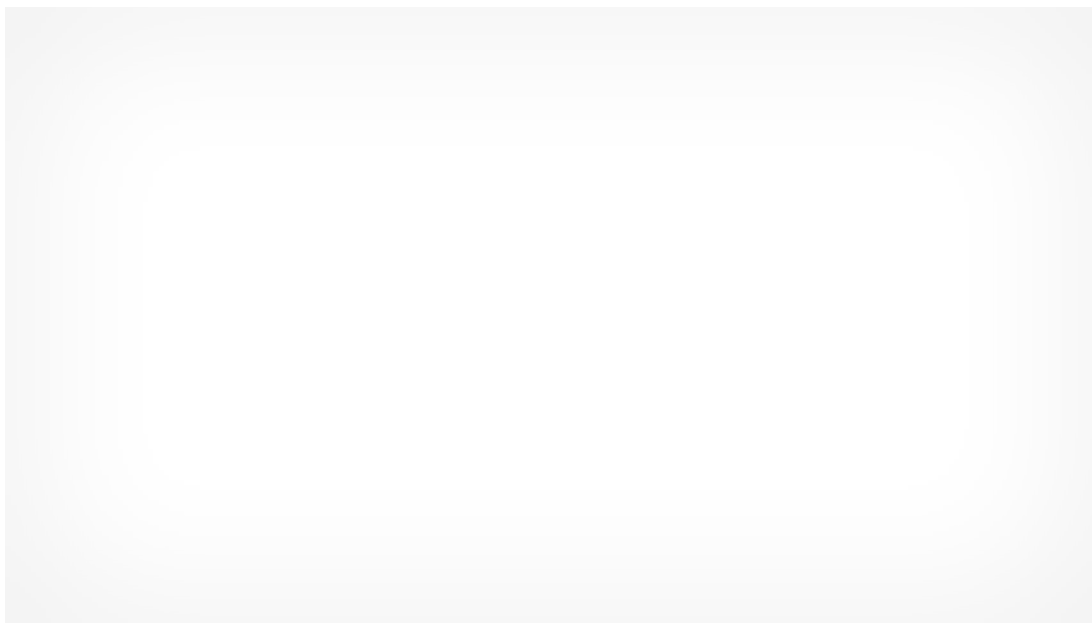
It's been slow going this week to get a vaccine in California.

With supplies limited, many parts of California have struggled to keep up with demand, in some cases saying appointments are full for the coming days.

Right now, officials are giving vaccinations only to long-term care facility staff and residents, health workers and those 65 and over. But there have been questions about who will come next. Gov. Gavin Newsom offered some clarity on that — [though many questions still remain.](#)

Q: What were the changes Newsom announced Monday?

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Newsom said the state would switch to an age-based eligibility approach. No details about the criteria were released Monday, but they could end up focusing on people over 50 first. It's also unclear if there would be a special designation for those with preexisting conditions.



CALIFORNIA

California will prioritize COVID-19 vaccine by age, not occupation, in next rounds

Jan. 25, 2021

Q: Is this a change?

Yes. Under the original plan's tier structure, Tier 2 workers in manufacturing, transportation and commercial and residential settings along with incarcerated people and homeless people would be prioritized.

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So essentially, Newsom is now prioritizing age over those specific cohorts.

Some groups have pushed for these changes. But some labor unions have criticized the changes, noting that essential workers are putting themselves at risk and should get vaccines as soon as possible. Disability rights groups say the changeup fails to prioritize those at highest risk for COVID-19 complications.

Q: When should someone expect to enter the next phase?

Last week, state officials said it could take until June to offer vaccinations to all those 65 and older. Los Angeles County estimated all residents might not be able to be vaccinated until 2022 unless more supply becomes available.

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State epidemiologist [Dr. Erica Pan said last week](#) that the state is receiving 300,000 to 500,000 doses each week. In Los Angeles County, 500,000 doses would be needed per week in order to vaccinate all adults by mid-summer, chief science officer Dr. Paul Simon said Friday. But at the rate that the current allocation is going, efforts would continue well into 2022.

Q: What about teachers?

The state has said that individuals 65 and older and healthcare workers are the current priority, followed by teachers, workers in food and agriculture and emergency services. Currently, it remains uncertain when those groups could start to actively sign up for vaccinations. [But it's becoming clear that vaccinating teachers](#) is the key to reopening schools to in-person learning.

This lack of clarity has led to growing anger as the school year slips away.

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Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell (D-Long Beach) expressed frustration that educators are not being prioritized by the L.A. County Health Department even as teachers in Long Beach are scheduled for vaccines this week. Although Long Beach is part of L.A. County, it operates its own independent health agency. L.A. County health officials said Monday that there are simply too many people in high-priority categories who need vaccines and too few doses.

L.A. County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said she hopes teachers in her jurisdiction could begin to [be immunized in February or March](#), but that would depend on the vaccine supply. The last day of instruction for the current school year in Los Angeles is June 10.

L.A. schools Supt. Austin Beutner and the Los Angeles Teachers Union are essentially in agreement on the two critical points needed for school reopening: teacher vaccination and a significant drop in coronavirus infection rates [in communities served](#) by L.A. Unified.

Q: How has the vaccine rollout been going this week?

ADVERTISEMENT

Slow.

Some regions including L.A. County said they have filled appointments for the next few days and hope to begin offering more soon.

Officials warn that vaccines will be [in short supply](#) in part because people who already have received their first shot now need their second. That will reduce the number of doses available for people seeking their first vaccination. Officials have estimated that if L.A. County gets 140,000 new doses this week, those needing a second dose would get the lion's share.

The weather is another factor. Strong winds and harsh weather conditions Monday forced the Orange County Health Care Agency to close its Disneyland vaccine supersite in Anaheim, turning away thousands of appointment holders for the [third time since last week](#).

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“At 3:30 p.m. today, our Disneyland Super POD site closed due to safety concerns related to inclement weather,” read a tweet posted by the agency. “Everyone who had an appointment today, Jan. 25, at 3:30 p.m. or later will be rescheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 27 at the same time.”

The post referred viewers to the Othena.com website and smartphone app, which have experienced backlogs in recent weeks, as tens of thousands of Orange County residents clamor to book appointments for individuals older than 65 and other Phase 1A individuals.

Here are the basics:

Los Angeles County: Residents [65 and older](#) can sign up for an appointment at the county Public Health Department’s [website](#). Residents without computer access can call (833) 540-0473 between 8 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. for assistance with reservations. The city of Los Angeles is also offering the vaccine to those 65 or older, through [a different online portal](#). That website connects patients to mass-vaccination sites.

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Orange County: The county opened a [large-scale COVID-19 vaccination site](#) Saturday at Soka University in Aliso Viejo. The county launched its [first vaccination center at Disneyland](#) in Anaheim. Eventually, the county plans to operate five centers, which health officials say is key to their goal of getting all residents vaccinated by July 4. For now, only healthcare workers, residents of long-term-care facilities and people 65 and older are eligible to be vaccinated at the centers.

Ventura County: The county is offering vaccinations to residents 75 and older, who can [sign up for appointments online](#) or by calling (805) 477-7151.

Inland Empire: Information for Riverside County residents can be found at the [Riverside University Health System](#), while San Bernardino County residents can consult the [county's website](#). Both counties are offering vaccines with various restrictions at multiple locations.

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COVID-19 VACCINES

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CALIFORNIA

Newsom's abrupt COVID-19 reopening brings high risks for California, but also potential economic rewards



Outdoor dining spaces will have the opportunity to reopen on Friday in Los Angeles County, including this downtown area in Covina, Calif. (Robert Gauthier / Los Angeles Times)

By TARYN LUNA, SOUMYA KARLAMANGLA, RONG-GONG LIN II, HANNAH FRY

JAN. 26, 2021 | 5 AM



SACRAMENTO — Gov. Gavin Newsom’s abrupt [move to lift stay-at-home orders](#) — allowing outdoor dining and other business activities to resume — represents a gamble that California can avoid another deadly coronavirus surge in the coming months despite a slow, frustrating rollout of the vaccine and the looming threat of more contagious strains of the virus taking hold across the state.

After a catastrophic fall-and-winter surge left about 20,000 dead, California is rapidly bending the curve as new cases fall and hospitalizations decline. COVID-19 hospitalizations began to fall about 2½ weeks ago, and much of this progress can be

attributed to residents changing their behavior by avoiding travel, staying at home more and following the new rules.

The question now is whether California can keep cases down even as activities such as dining, cosmetology and travel pick up.

Lifting the stay-at-home order should be a boost to some restaurant owners and other merchants whose businesses have been battered by cycles of closure since the pandemic began and who placed enormous pressure on the governor to ease restrictions as [campaigns](#) gather signatures to [recall him](#) from office.

But experts said it would not take a lot for the situation to spiral out of control again.

UC San Francisco epidemiologist Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo said lifting the order can work if the public — and businesses — follow the rules and show intense caution. This is more essential than ever, she said, because so much is still unknown about these new strains, which adds a new level of uncertainty to fighting the virus.

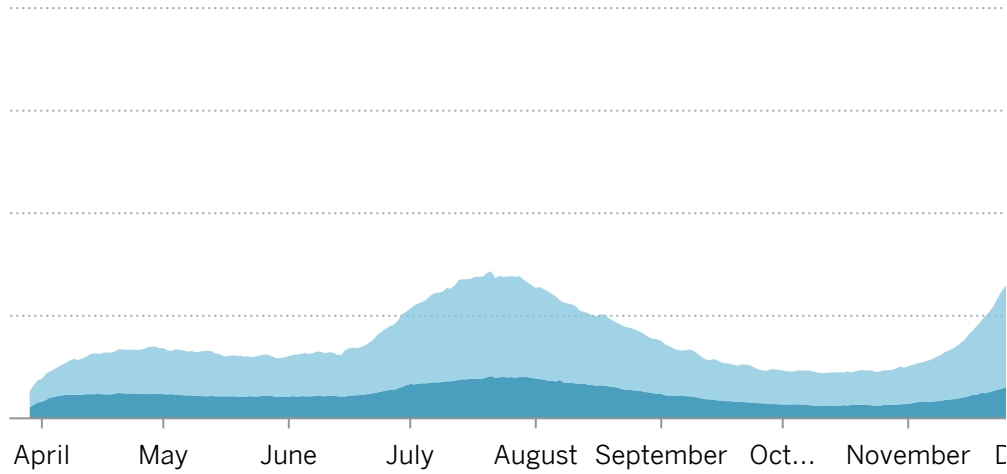
“Everything hinges on the behaviors we adopt. If we adopt behaviors where everyone is masking, everyone is keeping to distancing, that all of the rules the governor has in place are enforced, I think there’s a possibility for us to resume some of these activities,” Bibbins-Domingo said. “It’s not an outrageous idea. This is not an outrageous policy.”

California coronavirus hospitalizations

The number of hospital patients with a confirmed case

Total patients by day

ICU Other



California Department of Public Health

Ben Welsh

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Exclusive Updates on Cherry-Flavored Milk [Check This Out] [↗](#)

By California Milk Processing Board

The Glass Half Full News team gets exclusive content from kid influencers on dancing and snack competitions.

Newsom, in announcing the changes Monday, also struck a cautious note but said he believed the conditions had improved enough to try it out.

“We’re seeing a flattening of the curve. Everything that should be up is up; everything that should be down is down — case rates, positivity rates, hospitalizations, ICUs. Testing is starting to go back up, as well as vaccination rates in this state,” he said.

The shift took some officials and others by surprise, coming just a few weeks after California found itself the [American epicenter](#) of the coronavirus with hospitals overflowing, ambulance patients facing as much as a 17-hour wait to get into emergency rooms, hospital morgues overwhelmed and funeral homes forced to turn families away.

CALIFORNIA

How the ‘California miracle’ dissolved into a winter coronavirus nightmare

Jan. 22, 2021

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UC Berkeley epidemiologist Dr. John Swartzberg said he feared lifting the stay-at-home order was “premature” because the cases, while declining, remain very high. He said it might make more sense to wait a few weeks until cases go down further and California can begin reopening with a lower baseline.

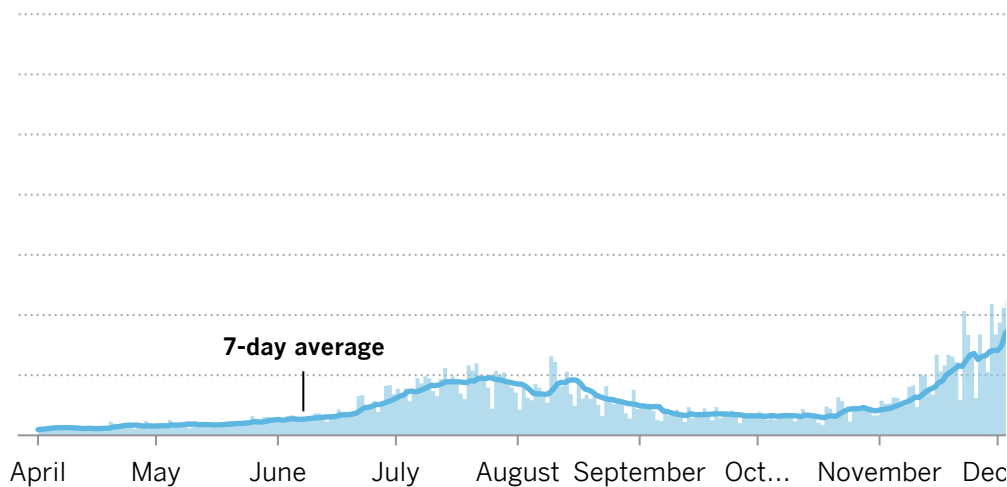
He noted that after last year’s spring and summer surges, California failed to bring its case numbers to a low level before reopening. That meant that when the next surge hit, it became even bigger than the one before it, he said.

“It’s like we’re climbing this mountain. We go two steps up and we just take one step back, and we take two steps up from there and one step back and we keep just having more cases,” he said. “We’re doing a lot better than we were doing 2½ weeks ago, but we’re doing terrible compared to three months ago. We need to knock these cases down so as we get more and more people vaccinated, we’ll get to a safer environment much more quickly.”

Coronavirus cases in California

The number of cases announced each day by local health officials.

New cases by day



The seven-day average offers a more stable view of the trend than daily totals, which are subject to bureaucratic delays.

[Times survey of local health departments](#)

Don Walsh

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The autumn-and-winter stay-at-home order was unpopular in many corners, with some politicians saying it went too far and restaurant owners [suing](#) in an effort to bring back outdoor dining. Critics questioned whether there was enough evidence to show outdoor dining was a significant spreader of the coronavirus. But there is evidence the order changed behavior and helped slow the spread.

A [calculation](#) by the L.A. County Department of Health Services found that the transmission rate of the virus began to climb in the region in the weeks before Halloween and accelerated until late November, when it reached a peak of 1.2, meaning on average every person infected with the virus was infecting 1.2 other people — a recipe for a dramatic worsening of the pandemic.

It was also in late November that L.A. County became the first in the state in the autumn to shut down outdoor restaurant dining, and a few days later became the first again in the state to issue a stay-at-home order that once again banned almost all private gatherings and instituted tighter capacity limits on stores. The county's model suggests that was the time period when the transmission rate began to fall, and by late December fell below 1, meaning that every infected person on average was infecting fewer than one other person.

L.A. County's coronavirus transmission rate climbed in October and November and hit a peak of 1.2 in late November, meaning every infected person on average transmitted the virus to 1.2 other people. (L.A. County Department of Health Services)

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“I think that the early action taken by L.A. County as cases began to rise has blunted the magnitude of this tsunami that we experienced. It would have been even worse had some of these measures not been taken early on,” said Dr. Robert Kim-Farley, medical epidemiologist and infectious diseases expert at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, and a former health official with L.A. County.

It would end up taking roughly two months for the effects of L.A. County’s health orders to convincingly begin reducing hospitalizations and offering officials confidence to begin reopening businesses. That’s similar to the amount of time it took for the summer’s business restrictions to have a similar impact.

“It takes time from when you initiate a control measure to when you actually see the effects of having that control measure in place. It’s like trying to steer a large supertanker ship. When you turn the rudder, it takes a long time before the ship begins to move,” Kim-Farley said.

Epidemiologists said it’s essential health officials keep focused on at least two mutant strains of the coronavirus in California.

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One of them, the B.1.1.7 variant first identified in Britain, is believed to be more transmissible and, according to new data, [may be possibly more deadly](#), and has been detected in L.A., San Diego and San Bernardino counties.

A [homegrown mutant strain in California, B.1.426](#), has also spread quite rapidly in recent weeks and officials are investigating whether it's partly responsible for California's devastating surge.

This should give the public pause, Bibbins-Domingo said. "If you take a long view of the pandemic, we actually need to reiterate more — not less — how much we need to be doing the types of things that are not fun for everybody, but have become the mainstay of policy until we get everyone vaccinated."

Which California counties are reopening?

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Under Newsom's changes, all counties will return to the colored tier system that assigns local risk levels based on case numbers and rates of positive test results for coronavirus infections.

Most areas will be classified under the [“widespread” risk tier](#), which permits hair and nail salons to offer limited services indoors but restricts many other nonessential indoor business operations, such as gyms and movie theaters.

“Today, we can lay claim to starting to see some real light at the end of the tunnel as it relates to case numbers,” Newsom said.

Hours later, Los Angeles County officials said they plan to take advantage of the relaxed restrictions — allowing for the immediate [reopening](#) of personal care services and [outdoor dining](#) at restaurants later this week. Additionally, hotels and motels can again be booked for nonessential travel and leisure.

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But conditions in hospitals remained crowded, according to L.A. County health officials who have watched as COVID-19 ripped through communities since Halloween, a time period that has resulted in more than 8,000 dead out of a cumulative total of 15,000.

Tracking the coronavirus in L.A. County

“We’re anxious, as is everyone, to move forward” with reopenings, county Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said during a briefing Monday.

But, she stressed, “this all depends on all of us” and, if the county’s coronavirus situation starts deteriorating again, “we’ll be in the horrible position of once again needing to backtrack.”

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Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said Monday morning that his administration learned of the governor’s move “as quickly and as suddenly as the public.”

Garcetti said coronavirus infections seem to be slowing in the L.A. region, but remain extremely high.

“Still very high historically,” he said. “Still numbers that are six to seven times more hospitalizations than what we had just a month and a half ago, but the right trend.”

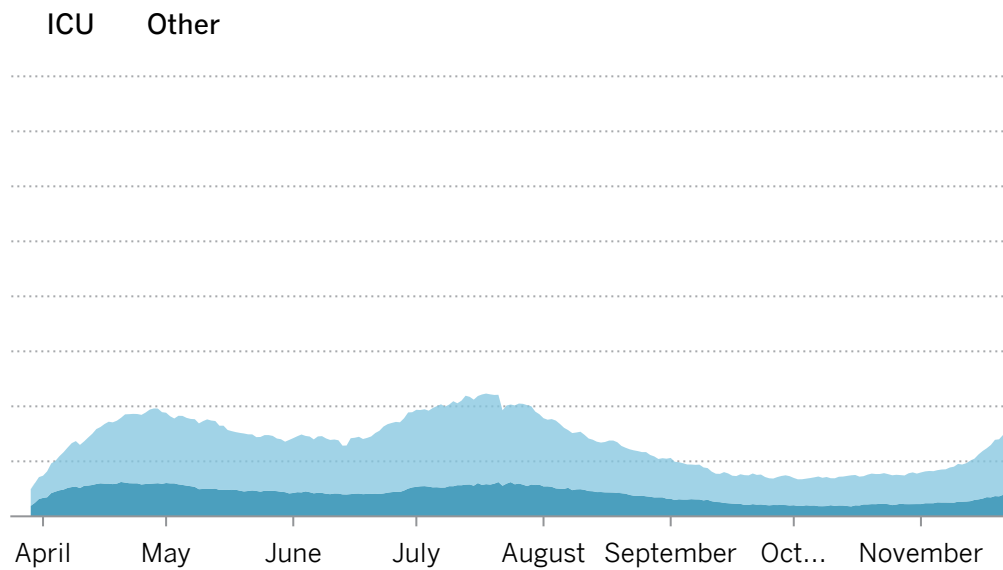
Garcetti said in a statement Monday night that the city would follow the county’s rules, including allowing outdoor restaurant dining to resume Friday.

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L.A. County coronavirus hospitalizations

The number of hospital patients with a confirmed case

Total patients by day



California Department of Public Health

Ben Welsh

Other counties from San Francisco to Orange said they hoped to get restaurants open for outdoor dining soon.

Orange County Supervisor Don Wagner, a frequent vocal critic of the state’s pandemic response and of Newsom, said rescinding the stay-at-home order was “a step in the right direction, but I’ve also learned during the course of COVID that this governor is very erratic. Who knows what will get him to change his mind again?”

“It’s a long time coming,” Wagner added Monday. “It was an unnecessary step when he shut us down. It’s a necessary step for him to open us up. Let’s just not pretend there’s a lot of science that he’s revealed behind his decision.”

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Coronavirus cases statewide »

As of January 26, 9:19 a.m. Pacific

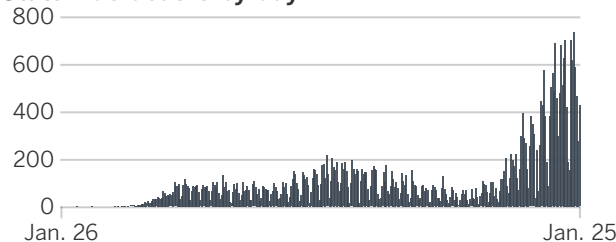
3,193,676

confirmed

37,558

deaths

Statewide deaths by day



California » L.A. County » Orange County »

Track: [Hospitals](#), [Reopenings](#), [Nursing homes](#), [Unemployment](#), [Prisons](#)

For all the concerns about how the changes will affect the spread of the coronavirus, the end of the stay-at-home order represents a life preserver for restaurants, which have been brought to the brink of financial collapse. While indoor dining is still considered too unsafe, many eateries invested in building elaborate outdoor dining areas that have sat empty since the stay-at-home order.

“This is a huge step forward, and it’s a big relief for everyone in this industry,” said JC Clow, the founder and managing partner of the Winery Restaurant Group, which has two locations in Orange County and one in San Diego County.

Clow closed outdoor dining at his three locations for about a week when California began imposing regional stay-at-home orders the week of Dec. 6. It was a huge blow to staffers who depended on the restaurant for a steady paycheck and income from gratuities. He started getting daily phone calls from staff members who were pleading for help, he said, with some on the brink of homelessness.

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“As those personal stories started coming in, we couldn’t just sit on our hands and do nothing,” he said. “A lot of these people have been with us since Day One, and when you hear those heartfelt cries for help, we just couldn’t turn the other cheek. We had to do what we could while still being safe, so we reopened outdoor dining.”

California coronavirus tracker »

3,193,676

cases

+540 today

14-day change

-33% 

37,558

deaths

+16 today

14-day change

+10% 

[California](#) » [L.A. County](#) » [Orange County](#) »

[Hospitals](#) » [Reopenings](#) » [Vaccines](#) »

Luna reported from Sacramento, Karlamangla and Fry from Southern California and Lin from San Francisco. Times staff writers Luke Money, Maura Dolan, Kevin Rector, Dakota Smith, Lila Seidman and Jenn Harris contributed to this report.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC



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Taryn Luna covers Gov. Gavin Newsom and California politics in Sacramento for the Los Angeles Times.

Soumya Karlamangla



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BUSINESS

Column: I just got my COVID vaccine. Here's why that's a problem



Orange County residents line up at the county's first large-scale vaccination site at a Disneyland parking lot on Jan. 13. (Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

By MICHAEL HILTZIK | BUSINESS COLUMNIST

JAN. 25, 2021 | 1:58 PM



At 7:20 p.m., Friday, Jan. 22, my iPhone dinged with a gratifying message, delivered via Gmail: I was eligible to schedule a COVID vaccine shot any time starting the next morning.

“Congratulations,” the message said. It also warned that “appointment slots are limited” and advised to act fast.

So I did. Just over 24 hours later, my wife and I had both received our initial doses of the Moderna COVID vaccine at Orange County’s mass inoculation center in a Disneyland parking lot.

We did an incredible job developing vaccines. Sadly, we dropped the ball about two yards short of the goal line.

DANA GOLDMAN, USC SCHAEFFER CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY AND ECONOMICS

We didn't jump the line — we both met the eligibility guidelines of the county and state. But that doesn't mean we weren't the beneficiaries of privilege.

I'm computer-adept enough to have registered with the county's Othena vaccination portal on Jan. 13, almost immediately after its launch and before a flood of registrations crashed the website.

I was able to check Othena's phone app dozens of times a day, to make sure I wasn't overlooked. When my appointment time approached, I could jump in my car for the 20-minute drive to Disneyland.

If my appointment had happened to fall on a workday, my schedule is flexible enough to accommodate the hour or so needed for the entire vaccination process.

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Kids Share the Dance Moves and the Fashion Tips You Need to Know [↗](#)

By California Milk Processing Board

The Glass Half Full News team gets exclusive content from kid influencers on dancing and snack competitions.

But what if none of these things were true? What if I didn't have broadband internet access, or the experience to navigate the rather intimidating Othena registration process? What if I didn't have a car to get to Disneyland?

Then I'd still be waiting, like millions of Californians and others across the country.

BUSINESS

Column: Unsurprisingly, Trump's rollout of the COVID vaccine is an utter fiasco

Dec. 30, 2020

"The first-come, first-served system will exacerbate inequality," says Tom Frieden, a former head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who is now chief executive of Resolve to Save Lives, a global public health initiative.

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America's vaccine rollout underscores the many shortcomings of the nation's healthcare system, which segregates people into two broad categories — those with easy access to care and those without.

Providers and public health agencies tend to be reactive — waiting for patients to reach out or for a crisis to develop.

COVID-19, however, requires what Frieden calls an “unprecedented vaccination campaign,” with trusted “ambassadors” circulating through hard-to-reach communities, or those generally mistrustful of government initiatives, to sign people up for vaccines and provide them access to mobile clinicians or convenient inoculation centers.

The Biden administration is preparing to launch such a program, but months of inaction by the Trump administration has left the country well behind the curve.

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As of Sunday, [according to the CDC](#), only about 18.5 million U.S. residents, or 5.6% of the population had received at least one dose of either of the two approved COVID vaccines, which require two doses for maximum efficacy. About half the 41.4 million distributed doses had been administered.

“We did an incredible job developing vaccines,” observes Dana Goldman, director of the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics. “Sadly, we dropped the ball about two yards short of the goal line.”

BUSINESS

Column: Pfizer, Moderna expect billions in profits from COVID vaccines. That's a scandal

Jan. 4, 2021

There are several reasons for the country's dismal record. On the most macro level, it reflects the fragmented structure of U.S. healthcare, which leaves care in the hands of providers with concerns for their patients but not so much for their communities.

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Another factor is the chronic underfunding of public health agencies at the federal and state levels. Those agencies are ill-equipped to reach out to lower-income and non-white

communities, which are disproportionately vulnerable to the pandemic and face difficulties accessing healthcare.

“State and local regulators rely too much on institutions that traditionally have failed to meet the communities most affected,” Goldman told me by email.

Add the hopelessly confused guidelines about who is eligible to get vaccinated and when. Orange County, where I live, opened inoculations to residents over 65, conforming with the state’s guidelines. But other counties are setting their own standards, such as limiting appointments for now to those aged at least 70 or 75.

A similar patchwork is in effect coast-to-coast: Connecticut, for instance, is vaccinating those age 75 and up, along with healthcare workers and first responders; Florida, 65-year-olds and healthcare workers; the District of Columbia accepts appointments from 65-year-olds and healthcare workers but also offers appointments by ZIP Code.

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The most important factor causing these limitations, of course, is the unavailability of doses. That’s an artifact of the Trump administration’s approach, or non-approach.

Federal law permits the government to step in and [license manufacturing of a drug](#) deemed to be in short supply. That hasn’t been done in this case; the developers of the

two vaccines currently licensed for use in the U.S., Moderna and Pfizer, have retained manufacturing rights, and plainly haven't been contracting for enough.

BUSINESS

Column: The new Democratic mandate includes COVID-19 relief, saving Obamacare and much more

Jan. 6, 2021

President Biden has talked about utilizing the Defense Protection Act to step up output, but only for ancillary vaccine materials such as vials and syringes, not for the dosages themselves.

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Trump also ceded responsibility for distribution to the states, without providing them with resources to handle the task.

“I’m disappointed that there weren’t massive preparations to receive the vaccines and the next day getting every dose stuck in an arm without delay,” says Bob Kocher, a nonresident senior fellow at the USC Schaeffer Center.

“The vaccines going through clinical development were the least secretive thing in the world; every time there was data out, there was a front-page article in every newspaper,”

Kocher says. “It wasn’t stunning that they were out, but it is stunning that we don’t have a way to give them out to people.”

Built-in inequities in American society are making the job harder. So far, there’s been minimal outreach to communities already left at the curb by the so-called digital divide. When the system depends on residents navigating websites to make vaccine appointments, that’s a major barrier.

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This is not the first time that technological obstacles have had the effect, deliberate or otherwise, of marginalizing low-income or working-class communities.

When Arkansas introduced its work requirement for Medicaid, officials demanded that the affected residents report their work hours via a website that was nonfunctional much of the day, in a state where 25% of the affected population have no access to the internet and more than half have no access to broadband service.

Column: Proving that work requirements work as intended, Arkansas throws thousands off Medicaid rolls

Sep. 7, 2018

In other words, the system was perfectly designed to throw thousands of needy residents off the health program ([and it worked](#), until a federal judge put the kibosh on it).

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Counties and other localities have been left to develop the logistics of mass vaccination as they go along. In California, some counties, including Los Angeles and Orange, have put out a call for volunteers to staff the centers, but licensed clinicians, who can actually inject the shots, are in short supply.

That was the experience of Melanie Berry, a West Los Angeles artist who volunteered to work at L.A. County's drive-through vaccination site at the Magic Mountain theme park in Valencia on Jan. 20.

Her post, which handled one of about a dozen lines of cars, had three stations to deliver shots, but enough clinicians to staff only two of them. It was the site's second day of operation, and it was still learning how to make the process more efficient.

Berry noticed that the clientele that day appeared to skew toward the white and economically-higher end, with an abundance of late model cars. "That told me there are a bunch of people not getting access," she told me. From her own experience trying to gain an appointment through the county's online portal, it was clear that "you have to be persistent and diligent."

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I should say that, judging from my experience at Orange County's mass vaccination site at Disneyland, the county had figured out most of the logistics. The site was staffed more abundantly than my local Target store, with volunteers directing us where to park and dividing the sizable crowd on Saturday morning by appointment time.

Once each line started moving, we moved smartly through a station where our temperature was checked, then to one verifying our appointment, and another where we answered a dozen questions about our health and received the shot, and finally were directed to a tent where we waited 15 minutes in case an allergic reaction set in. The entire process took about an hour.

But that system won't be enough once adequate vaccine supplies are available and the campaign moves beyond motivated applicants with the flexibility to take the time to register and schedule an appointment and access to transport.

The new administration's vaccine strategy includes supporting community vaccination centers. It says it will "leverage retail locations, grocers and pharmacies," noting that 90% of Americans live within five miles of a drugstore. It says it will also launch mobile clinics and support state efforts to deploy emergency medical technicians and firefighters to bring vaccines to patients, rather than the other way around.

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Biden's \$1.9-trillion coronavirus rescue package includes \$20 billion for vaccination funding for states, tribes and territories, as well as a proposal for the federal government to cover 100% of the cost of vaccinating Medicaid enrollees. Yet that funding, along with the rest of the rescue plan, is stalled by a Congress bickering over its details. Evidently the message that this is an emergency hasn't filtered up to Capitol Hill.

In qualitative terms, what's required isn't anything that hasn't been done in the U.S. before, whether we're talking about [a crash smallpox vaccination program](#) in New York in 1947 or the rollout of polio vaccines starting in the mid-1950s.

But vaccinating the American public against COVID-19 is a bigger job. "This is the most complicated vaccination program in U.S. history," Frieden says. "I'm relatively optimistic that we'll see steady progress, but I don't think we should underestimate the challenge ahead. "

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Federal court strikes down some COVID-19 church restrictions, leaves others intact



Federal court strikes down some COVID-19 church restrictions, leaves others intact

By **SEAN EMERY** | semery@scng.com | Orange County Register

PUBLISHED: January 25, 2021 at 4:05 p.m. | UPDATED: January 25, 2021 at 4:41 p.m.



A federal appeals court on Monday handed a partial victory to a Pasadena church by agreeing to its request to strike down state coronavirus rules setting specific church attendance numbers, but the court still upheld other limits on worship services in areas hit hard by the pandemic.

A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in response to a lawsuit brought by Harvest Rock Church, barred state-imposed indoor church attendance restrictions of 100 and 200 people for areas that are in the second and third tiers of the state's four-tier pandemic tracking system.

However, the appellate justices allowed the state to continue to fully prohibit indoor worship services in regions that are in the first tier, which is the strictest tier, of the tracking system or under stay-at-home-orders due to uncontrolled spread of the virus.

The ruling also allows the state to set restrictions on indoor worship attendance based on a percentage of a church's capacity as set by fire codes. And it also allows the state to restrict singing and chanting during indoor services, which state officials have identified as potential drivers of infections.

Harvest Rock – which has locations in Pasadena, Santa Ana, Corona and downtown Los Angeles – [challenged the state coronavirus restrictions on worship services](#), describing them as “draconian and unconscionable” and alleging that the state was giving preferential treatment to nonreligious gatherings.

[The state has defended the restrictions](#), arguing that they are needed to limit rising coronavirus-case rates and hospitalizations and are proportional to the risk posed by indoor worship activities such as singing and chanting.

[The case has been closely watched following a U.S. Supreme Court decision that barred similar restrictions on religious services in New York](#). The federal court battle over limits on worship services in the midst of the pandemic was seen as a likely preview of how the expanded conservative majority on the Supreme Court will view religious rights.

The brief appellate opinion in the Harvest Rock case points to another recent opinion in a separate but similar case involving Chula Vista-based South Bay United Pentacostal Church.



In the South Bay opinion, a different panel of appellate judges noted that the ban on singing and chanting applied to all indoor activities, not just religious ones. The judges also pointed out that a hard numerical cap on attendees doesn't take into account the size of a particular church, while a percentage limit based on church capacity is in line with coronavirus limits placed on non-religious businesses and gatherings.

The Liberty Counsel, which is representing Harvest Rock in the legal battle, indicated that they plan to appeal Monday's decision to the Supreme Court. Liberty Counsel founder Mat Staver said in a written statement that the Supreme Court "has already issued a clear road map that leads to the ultimate conclusion that Gov. Gavin Newsom's ban of worship is unconstitutional"

The Harvest Rock opinion was released the same day that state officials lifted the statewide stay-at-home orders, placing most the state, including all of Southern California, back into the most restrictive tier of the four-tier pandemic tracking system.

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Sean Emery | Reporter



LOCAL NEWS • News

Carousel Mall proposals go before San Bernardino leaders this week

However, the final selection of a preferred developer is not under consideration Wednesday, Jan. 27

By **BRIAN WHITEHEAD** | bwhitehead@scng.com | The Sun
PUBLISHED: January 24, 2021 at 9:53 p.m. | UPDATED: January 25, 2021 at 3:11 p.m.

Two developers are expected to pitch their respective proposals this week for the Carousel Mall site in downtown San Bernardino.

For the first time since the City Council [commissioned them to craft comprehensive plans](#) for the shuttered shopping center and surrounding area, SCG America and the team of Renaissance Downtowns USA and ICO Real Estate Group will present their much-anticipated visions at a special council meeting Wednesday, Jan. 27, accessible through the city's website.

According to [a 340-page staff report](#), the final selection of a preferred developer is not under consideration Wednesday. That decision, staffers say, will be made at a later date.

Below is a summary of each proposal:





This rendering of “The Galand” would transform the Carousel Mall site in downtown San Bernardino into a sprawling new community with residential, office, recreation, entertainment, retail and food and beverage space. (Courtesy of the city of San Bernardino)

SCG America

For the 43-acre mall site, Garden Grove-based SCG America has proposed a mixed-use development called “The Galand.” The \$800 million project includes plans for 1,875 residential units; more than 3 acres of designated public open space; 54,800 square feet of food and beverage uses; 24,000 square feet of entertainment space; and an 8,000-square-foot indoor community hub built from a portion of the existing mall.

“The Galand ... is envisioned as the new frontier to this gateway city,” the proposal reads. “It will usher in a new urban experience in San Bernardino, a place where the City greets residents and visitors in a dynamic environment that is resilient, blending work, live and play.”

Pitched as [a catalyst for the future revitalization](#) of downtown San Bernardino, the plan calls for reestablishing the historic street system, extending F and G streets into the site and building a transit-oriented community around six walkable and connected districts: The Paseo, Carousel Place, Cal Vida North, Cal Vida South, Galand West and Galand Green.

“The Galand,” the presentation reads, “will seamlessly fit into the fabric of the city.”

At 629,000 square feet, The Paseo, at Fourth and E streets on the northeast corner of the site, would have retail, food and beverage, entertainment and office space, along with a boutique hotel.



At Second and F streets, Carousel Place would include multi-family housing, retail space and a urban grocery store integrated into a food hall inside renovated mall space.

Cal Vida North, along Fourth Street, and twin Cal Vida South, along Second Street, would have more than 1,200 new residences, with live/work units, shops, cafes and recreation space.

Galand West would be a four-story building with 424 residences and shops and restaurants at the street corners on the west side of the site near the 215 Freeway.

Lastly, Galand Green, called “the heart of The Galand,” would be a park “celebrating the revitalization of Downtown San Bernardino.” The open space would include cafes, event space and a performance pavilion.

The Galand covers 2.25 million square feet and would be developed in phases through 2029.

SCG America officials expect to create 562 permanent jobs and generate \$15.1 million yearly in state and local tax revenue.



This rendering shows two developers’ shared vision for what could become of the Carousel Mall site in downtown San Bernardino. A Riverwalk flows through the new community, which would include residential, office, entertainment, retail and food and beverage space. (Courtesy of the city of San Bernardino)

Renaissance/ICO



Renaissance Downtowns USA and ICO Real Estate Group say converting the mall site into a lively downtown begins with reestablishing the historic street grid to create a more walkable, small-block structure.

The two intend to plant thousands of trees to create “an extensive urban canopy that creates microclimates” for walking, biking and other outdoor activities that reduces “the heat island effect, adds beauty, improves air quality (and) adds habitat for wildlife,” among other benefits, according to their proposal.

New housing at the site would include lofts, live/work units, apartments, condos and townhomes, and there’s an invitation to collaborate with city officials and community stakeholders to create distinct districts, each with its own character.

The developers say the site could have up to 3,500 new residential units, along with supporting retail, entertainment, commercial and office uses. Buildings would have green roof-top designs, with high-efficiency heating and/or cooling systems.

Furthermore, Renaissance and ICO officials pitch a Riverwalk that loops through the new development.

“Our vision includes a central lagoon with boat rentals and gondola rides,” the presentation reads. “Slow footpaths would meander along the water’s edge. ... The value of such an attraction cannot be overstated. The Riverwalk will enliven downtown with enviable cultural and economic activities.”

In addition to the Carousel Mall site, the developers highlighted areas around downtown, such as City Hall and the area adjacent to the County Government Center, that could be included in an expanded redevelopment project.

A trolley route is proposed downtown as well.

“The redevelopment of the Carousel Mall,” the proposal reads, “should be a catalyst for positive change throughout Downtown San Bernardino.”

The City Council meets at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday via web conference.

To provide public comment on the project, email publiccomments@sbcity.org or call 909-384-5208 and leave a message by 4 p.m. Wednesday.



LOCAL NEWS • News

Ontario boosts homeless services with \$800,000 program

New contract will mostly be used to place homeless persons into permanent housing



Judy Conner, director of Ontario Access Center, run by the nonprofit Mercy House, talks to client Emelda Caluag, 53, center, who is experiencing homelessness, as people wait for assistance at the Ontario Access Center in Ontario on Friday, Jan. 22, 2021. (Photo by Watchara Phomicinda, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

By **STEVE SCAUZILLO** | sscauzillo@scng.com | San Gabriel Valley Tribune

PUBLISHED: January 25, 2021 at 12:18 p.m. | UPDATED: January 26, 2021 at 7:35 a.m.

Often, the biggest hurdle to helping the homeless is finding them a place to stay and then paying to keep it.



In Southern California, a housing shortage combined with high rents, aggravated by [people losing their income](#) due to 10 months of [coronavirus-related shutdowns](#), has increased homelessness and made it tougher on cities working to solve the problem.

Ontario seems to be an exception. The city owns 62 affordable apartments for qualified individuals to live in – giving the city a leg up in eradicating local homelessness. In addition, the City Council on Tuesday, Jan. 19, approved an \$800,000 program in which the bulk of the dollars will go toward paying the rent of formerly homeless tenants for 12 months.

“The city of Ontario and its partners were years ahead in creating housing stock; however, we always need more housing. Until we end homelessness, I will never say we have enough,” Larry Haynes, executive director of Mercy House Living Centers of Santa Ana, said on Wednesday, Jan. 21.

Haynes, who has been with the nonprofit for 31 years, said he was excited about receiving the contract from Ontario. The city has been working with Mercy House since 2005, records show.

The new contract will provide Mercy House about \$83,000 for operational and administrative costs, while the rest, about \$717,000, will go toward rental assistance, said Scott Murphy, Ontario’s executive director of community development.

The city estimates the money will help 36 households – more than 100 people – receive rental help of up to \$20,000 per household for 12 months. Each resident kicks in 30% of their household income toward rent. Assistance can be used for security deposits and utility deposits.

Funding for the program comes entirely from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. U.S. veterans receive priority, said city spokesman Dan Bell.

“We get them into housing, whether it is the properties the city owns or other apartments,” Murphy said.

“Getting them subsidized rent will help them get back on their feet. They can then focus on getting a job,” Bell said.



The contract, with rental assistance as the focus, is at the end of the line of what Ontario calls its “continuum of care.” In a city-owned facility known as the Ontario Access Center on South Bon View Avenue, Mercy House provides staff to help clients. Unhoused individuals have access to showers, laundry facilities, job counselors and case management workers. Some common areas are closed due to COVID-19.

The city also provides a 34-bed transitional housing shelter, and pays for Mercy House’s management of unhoused people living in Ontario – that includes helping them find housing.

D’Andre Lampkin, a city Planning Commission member whose foundation runs a food pantry in a facility near the Ontario Convention Center, says he’s seen evidence of the city’s program.

Many who came into the Lampkin Foundation for food were living in motels or permanent housing.

“Two people said they both lived in apartments in Ontario but they both needed food,” Lampkin said on Friday, Jan. 22. A young man who came in for groceries before the new year said he was looking for work.

Lampkin said he heard from those who had been to the Ontario Access Center and were receiving help by case workers. All said the counselors stressed the need for a plan for the future, part of what Lampkin sees as a practical, wholistic approach.

In January 2019, Ontario had 128 homeless persons including those unsheltered and in transitional housing, according to the [San Bernardino County Homeless Count](#). In May 2020, Ontario reported 74 homeless persons. As of mid-January 2021, the number was about 60 persons, according to Murphy.

Haynes said the new rental assistance dollars for permanent housing meshes well with those who may fall through the cracks.

“We call it progressive engagement,” Haynes explained. “It allows us to engage households that are in need of more help than typical rapid rehousing would offer.”

In April, shortly after the pandemic broke out, the city worked with Mercy House to [find shelter in local motels and hotels for 88 unhoused people](#). As of Thursday, only two people remain housed in hotels, Murphy said.



However, Mercy House staffers often accompany Ontario Police Department officers on homeless sweeps. Often individuals are brought to motels, Murphy said. Haynes said his staff helped remove 100 individuals from the streets during the spring.

“No city is immune from the challenges of homelessness and poverty. Ontario performs really, really well. We have a close relationship between city staff and our staff,” Haynes added.

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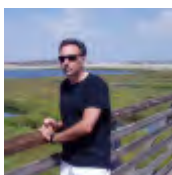
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Steve Scauzillo | Reporter

Steve Scauzillo has been a journalist for more than 40 years, had has worked as a beat reporter, assistant city editor, Opinion Pages Editor, general assignment and transportation/environment writer. Steve loves to explore the outdoors by hiking the Angeles National Forest and is an amateur bird watcher. Steve is on the board of the San Gabriel Valley LGBTQ Center in Arcadia and a

