

# COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers

Monday, March 31, 2020 9:00 AM

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## Meeting Recording:

Topic: COVID19 Updates & Report-outs with Homeless Service Providers

Date: Mar 31, 2020 08:53 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

N/A

# Meeting Agenda

Austin/Travis County

COVID19 Updates & Report-outs w/ Homeless Service Providers  
March 31<sup>th</sup> Agenda



Agency Updates



City of Austin / Austin Public Health



ECHO – Local Operations



Medical System Updates – Dr. Audrey Kuang & Dr. Tim Mercer



Wrap Up – Next Call: Wednesday, April 1st @ 9:00am

09:04:19 From IritUmani : I have 3 volunteers willing to deliver prepared food to folks in hotels. Who should I send their e-mail addresses to?  
09:07:31 From bronwyn.towart : Do we have a phone number for the medical hotline?  
09:09:44 From IritUmani : And when you will have the hot line? prediction of time it will go live?  
09:09:58 From mylesm : for food distribution volunteers please contact michelle.myles@austintexas.gov  
09:11:15 From Laura Evanoff : Thanks Michelle!  
09:11:27 From Stephanie Eaton : what are the hours of operation of this going to be for getting people in?  
09:13:03 From Dylan Shubitiz : Why did the city secure hotel rooms with inside entries instead of exterior entries?  
09:13:09 From david gomez : if we are going to make tents available, can we offer an area or park for people to set up their tents and have access to basic needs like food, hand washing and port a potties and creating housing plans?  
09:16:07 From Barbara Poppe : Hi everyone - I wanted to let you know that the national consultants (Julie, Matthew, and Barb) are working closely with City and ECHO to make sure your efforts benefit from lessons from across the country as well as your local expertise from the various agencies who feed into this process. I really appreciate your hard work to help your clients. I can only how much stress you are feeling. We look forward to all of your good ideas as Vella mentioned. Thanks for being part of this critically important process.  
09:18:13 From IritUmani : Thanks for all you do!  
09:18:32 From Erin Goodison : Thanks!  
09:18:32 From Preston Petty : Thanks Laura!

## Meeting Notes:

### ECHO –Kate Moore

- ECHO has been working closely with COA and APH on the process of how a person can access a unit when needing isolation or quarantine
- We are working on how we are going to track this for our clients through the city's system
- We have decided on a prescreen tool that will go into HMIS and captures risk factors and exposures to determine next step
- The screening tool will be used by shelters, outreach workers, and day resource staff
- The next step will lead to calling a new hotline staffed by Austin Public Health nurses

- The hotline determines and makes decisions for all community members who are eligible for hotel unit regardless of housing status
- Once a person has been identified as needing a unit ECHO will be notified
  - We are still working on what this process will look like
- Once ECHO is notified ECHO will connect person(s) who are experiencing homelessness to the homeless response system
- The city is working on transportation for these clients to the hotel units for isolation and/or quarantine.
- The city has asked ECHO to assist with building out a proposal to fund and provide support services onsite at the isolation/quarantine hotel units coming on board.
  - ECHO will be sending out an electronic survey for stakeholders to give their feedback and suggestions - need leadership staff to complete survey monkey and send back with suggested services and capacity to provide services from each agency that can take on additional work.
  - City of Austin does not anticipate providing COA staffing to support persons who are staying in isolation/quarantine hotel units.
- The hope is to connect more people to permanent housing resources with stimulation funds
- Screening tool overview – graphic attached to email.

## CUC Health Care for the Homeless Team – Tim Mercer

- Available for consult if needed
- Finalized screening tool for community to use
- Length of stay in unit depends on case and determined by exposure, symptomatic, non-symptomatic and testing results
- For example, if positive and symptomatic recommended length of stay is 7 days from beginning of symptoms and 72 hours from resolution of fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms

## City of Austin / Austin Public Health – Vella Karmen

- City memo sent out – <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/pio/document.cfm?id=338058>



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Christopher Shorter, Assistant City Manager  
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager

**DATE:** March 27, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Update on Homelessness Services During Response to COVID-19

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This memorandum serves to provide updates on the impacts of COVID-19 to services related to homelessness within the community. The issues addressed in this memorandum include: (1) Access to Services: Basic Hygiene, Social Services, and Food, and Health Services and Community Coordination (2) Hotel and Motel Leasing and Acquisition, (3) The Homeless Outreach Street Team & Emergency Medical Services Community Health Paramedics, (4) Underpass and Encampment Cleaning Process and Coordination Efforts, and (5) Communications

- Use of Hotels for isolation and quarantine:

- Isolation/Quarantine Hotel Units are available for anyone without a place to go – including first responders, travelers, and others who may not feel safe returning home.
- Outreach teams are not expected to provide transit for clients
- COVID-19 TESTING
  - Will be inconsistencies with testing based on supply and test result turnaround time
  - APH has a two-day turn around for tests but is only testing symptomatic people due to lack of testing kits available
- APH working to get hotline up and running
- Info hosted on [www.austintexas.gov/covid19](http://www.austintexas.gov/covid19)

### [Austin Community Steps Up to Help Feed Struggling Families during COVID-19 Crisis](#)

## Q&A

- What to make sure everyone understands the difference between “isolation” and Quarantine: at least as I understand the CDC’s definitions. Isolation refers to separating a sick individual who is contagious while quarantine restricts the movement and separates people that have been exposed. APH - agree?
  - No. Vella Karman to send out confirmed definitions.
  - Response: From the current Isolation Facility plan which is in line with the algorithm below (per APH): Quarantine (asymptomatic clients who have been exposed to positive COVID-19) & Isolation (symptomatic Person Under Investigation with or without positive test)
- Will youth (minors) be eligible and able to access hotel units?
  - Vella to get this info
- What are range of services envisioned at hotel?
  - Survey will be sent out by ECHO to collect feedback.
- Will food need to be provided to hotel in addition to support services?
- In the case of a person in a shelter who has symptoms can they go directly to unit instead of back to shelter? Concern expressed surrounding shelters being able to isolate and quarantine people effectively and not being prioritized for testing.

## Comments and Suggestions for Follow Up

- Suggestion to have all shelter stayers prioritized for testing resources before entering into shelters.
- Outreach staff would need immediate access to hotline and hotel transportation once someone identified as symptomatic.

## Resources

- COA Homeless Strategy page: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austins-homeless-strategy-covid-19-support>
- Google Drive Folder (drop docs/flyers to share)  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13MPhvSwdYqfNHASyfnOZgb0x9ScsHGmE>
- Q&A Form  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScLTzZ6S91QYm3REfD7Lo6AVJ55dRLaTgsM7mZxx\\_Dc1pBSRg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScLTzZ6S91QYm3REfD7Lo6AVJ55dRLaTgsM7mZxx_Dc1pBSRg/viewform)
- Community Google Doc (Homeless Services Continuities)  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SSLjrNBi7TWvpisfZ5PNIXUjQU\\_5A9ecoxvmH9DHycM/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SSLjrNBi7TWvpisfZ5PNIXUjQU_5A9ecoxvmH9DHycM/edit)